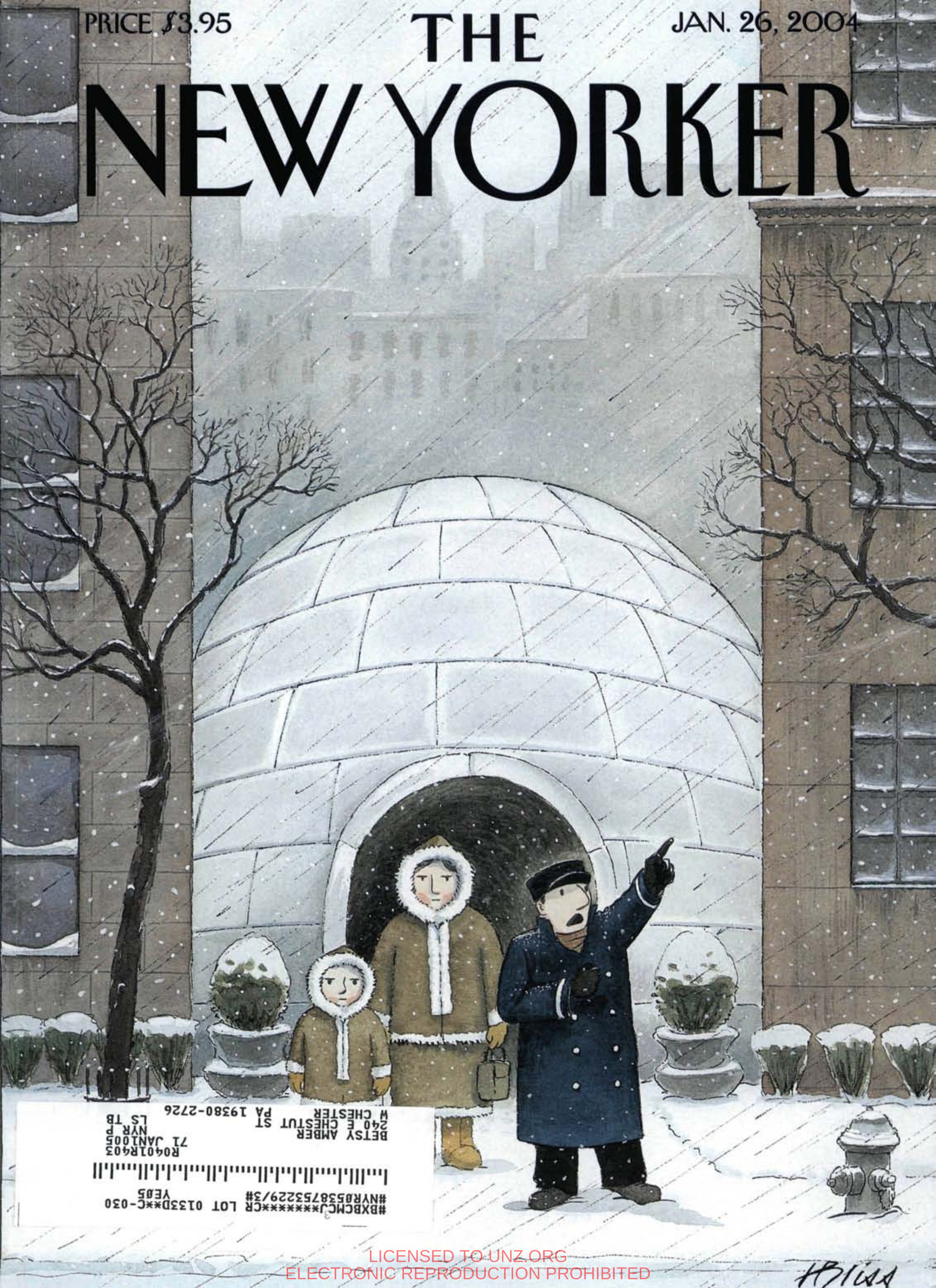
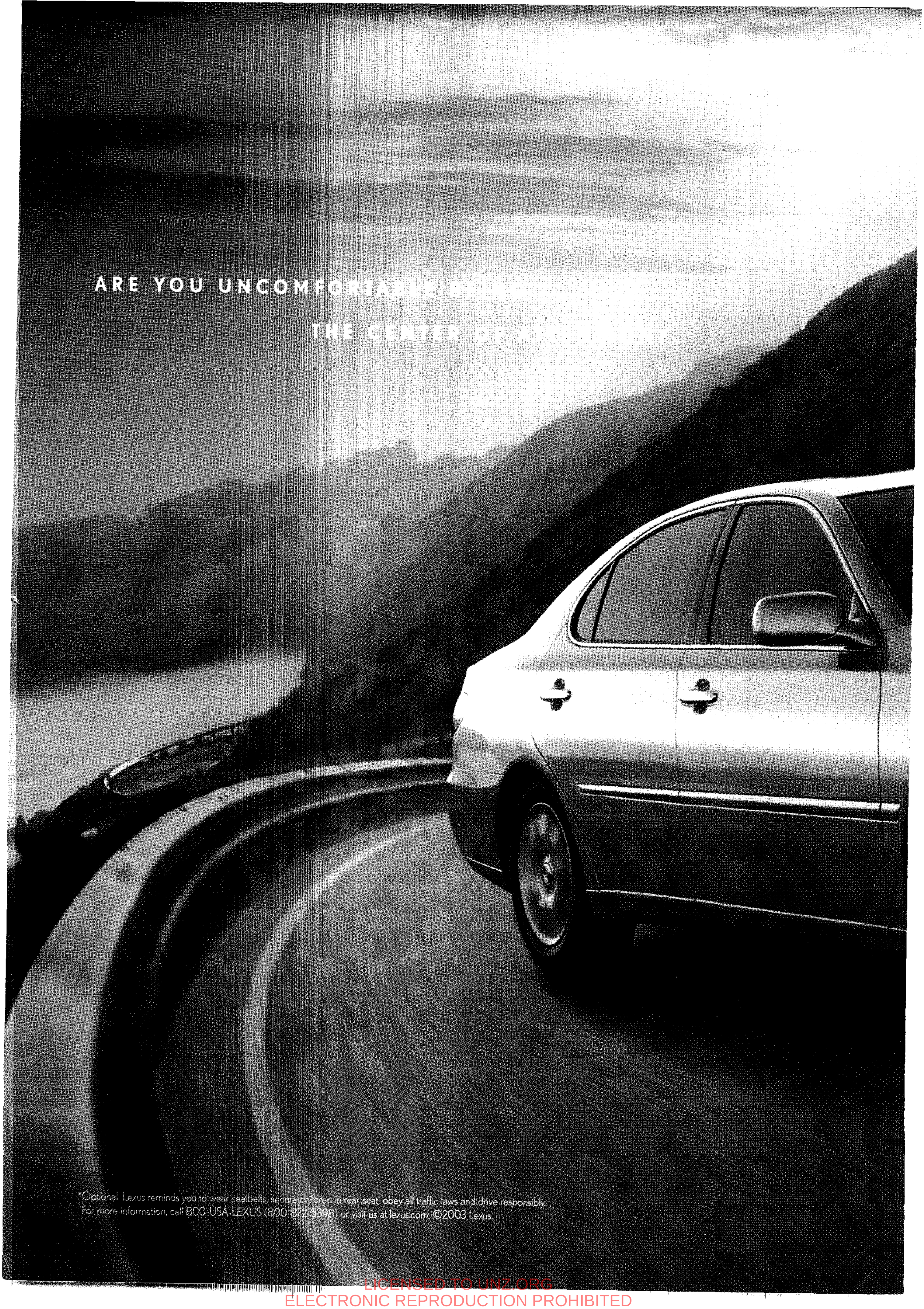
PRICE $3.95

# THE NEW YORKER

JAN. 26, 2004



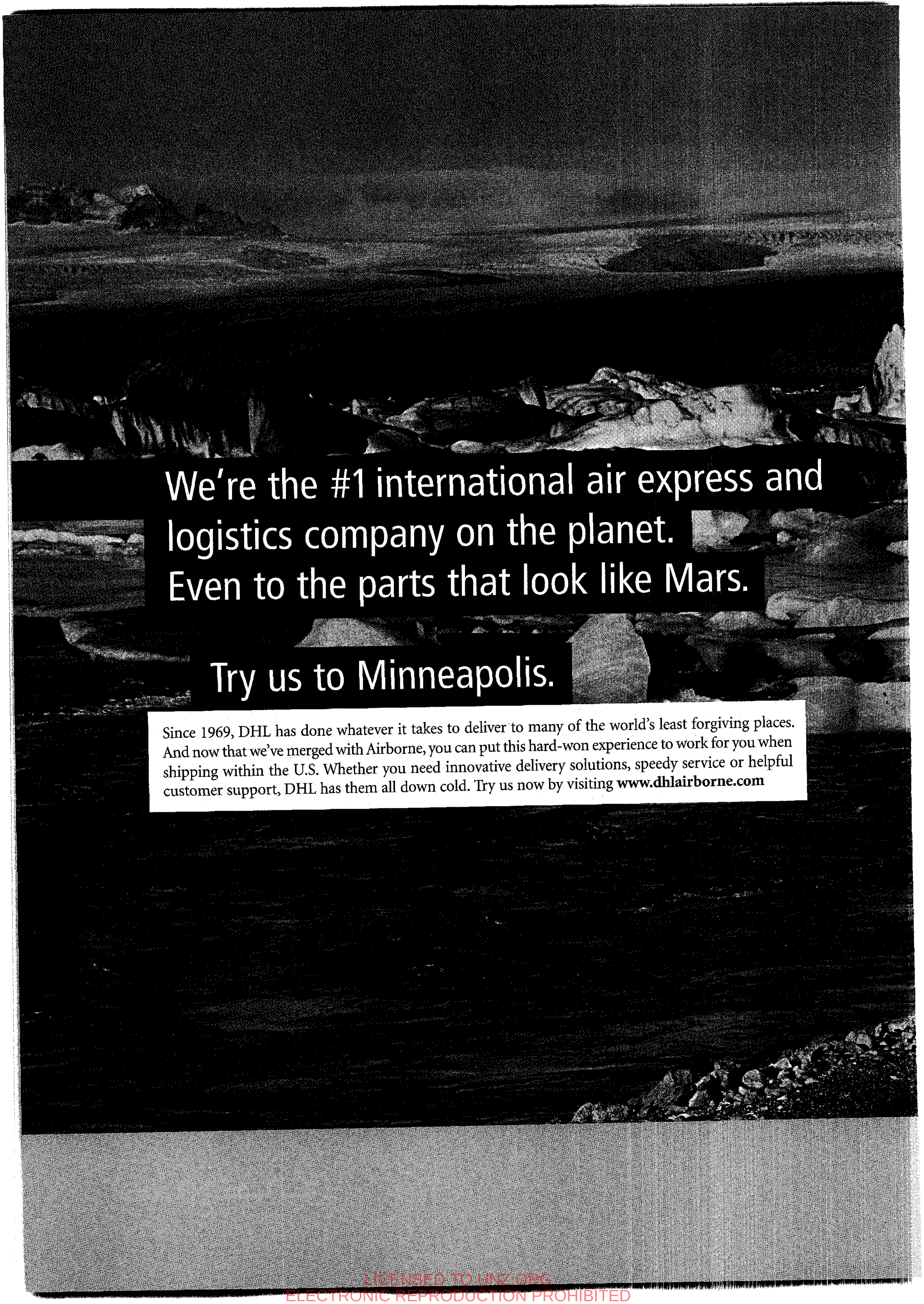
#BXBCMCJ*****CR LOT 0133D**C-030
#NYR0538753229/3# YE05
R0401R403
71 JAN1005
NYR P
LS TB
BETSY AMBER
240 E CHESTUT ST
W CHESTER PA 19380-2726


ARE YOU UNCOMFORTABLE BEING
THE CENTER OF ATTENTION?

*Optional. Lexus reminds you to wear seatbelts, secure children in rear seat, obey all traffic laws and drive responsibly.
For more information, call 800-USA-LEXUS (800-872-5398) or visit us at lexus.com. ©2003 Lexus.

Not everyone can handle being catered to. Cared for. Protected. Indulged. But if you feel you can embrace that kind of treatment, there's a good chance you'll appreciate the attentive qualities of the ES 330. You'll find amenities like a 10-way, power-adjustable driver's seat, dual-zone climate control and the three-dimensional richness of a Mark Levinson® audio system* to make your trip more pleasurable. There's a 3.3-liter V6 engine that quietly, smoothly delivers you to your destination. As well as the kind of advanced technology that actually anticipates your needs on the road. (If it makes you feel any better, the only one who really needs to know is you.) **THE ES 330**

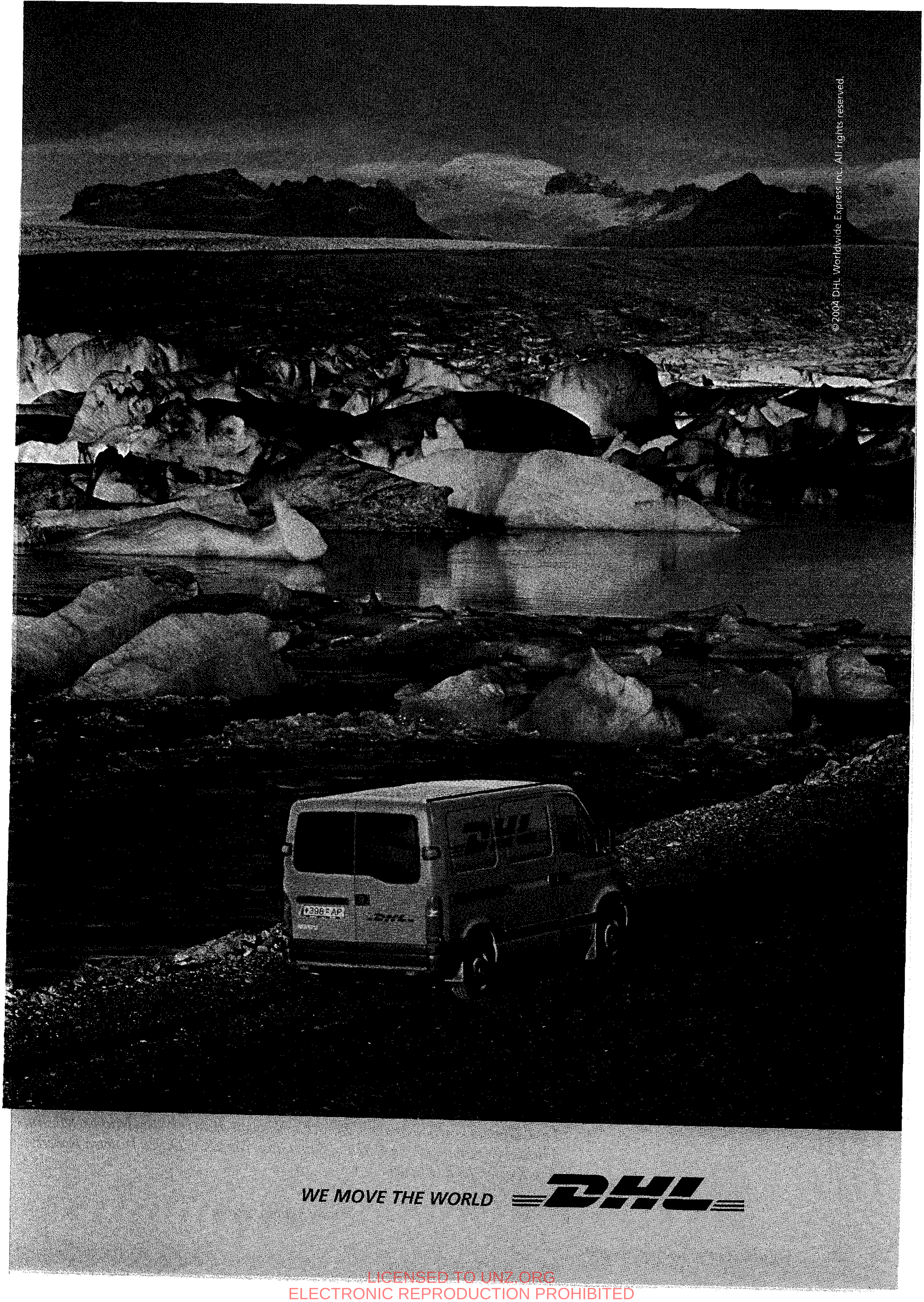
THE PASSIONATE PURSUIT OF PERFECTION. LEXUS



We're the #1 international air express and logistics company on the planet.
Even to the parts that look like Mars.

Try us to Minneapolis.

Since 1969, DHL has done whatever it takes to deliver to many of the world's least forgiving places. And now that we've merged with Airborne, you can put this hard-won experience to work for you when shipping within the U.S. Whether you need innovative delivery solutions, speedy service or helpful customer support, DHL has them all down cold. Try us now by visiting **www.dhlairborne.com**


WE MOVE THE WORLD
DHL

©2004 DHL Worldwide Express Inc. All rights reserved.

ADVERTISEMENT

THE NAYSAYER

Q: I'm thinking about quitting my Wall Street job to pursue my passion for the great outdoors. What do you recommend?

*Leaving for Greener Pastures,*
*New York City*

Dear Pastures,

I would guess that you have a ton of cash and a cushy life. Why give that up? Try taking a long vacation. Trust me, after a month of roughing it in the outdoors, you're going to miss your fancy loft and German automobile.

And call me when you get back, I need some investment tips.

At your service,
*The Naysayer*

# THE NEW YORKER

JANUARY 26, 2004

8 GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN
23 THE TALK OF THE TOWN
*Paul O'Neill tells all; the haunted hotel.*

*Jerome Groopman* 30 ANNALS OF MEDICINE
The Grief Industry
*Does crisis counselling really work?*
*Frank Gannon* 40 SHOUTS & MURMURS
Aristotle on Relationships
*Tad Friend* 42 LETTER FROM CALIFORNIA
River of Angels
*Trying to rescue L.A.'s lost waterway.*
*Ian Parker* 50 A REPORTER AT LARGE
Victims and Volunteers
*Amnesty International rallied around a threatened researcher. Then came the doubts.*
*Burkhard Bilger* 62 THE SPORTING SCENE
Twin Peaks
*Skiing champions collide on the slopes.*
*Antonya Nelson* 74 FICTION
"Eminent Domain"

THE CRITICS

*David Denby* 84 THE CURRENT CINEMA
*"Aileen: Life and Death of a Serial Killer," "Monster."*
*Photograph by Richard Avedon.*
*Hilton Als* 87 THE THEATRE
*"King Cowboy Rufus Rules the Universe!"*

BOOKS

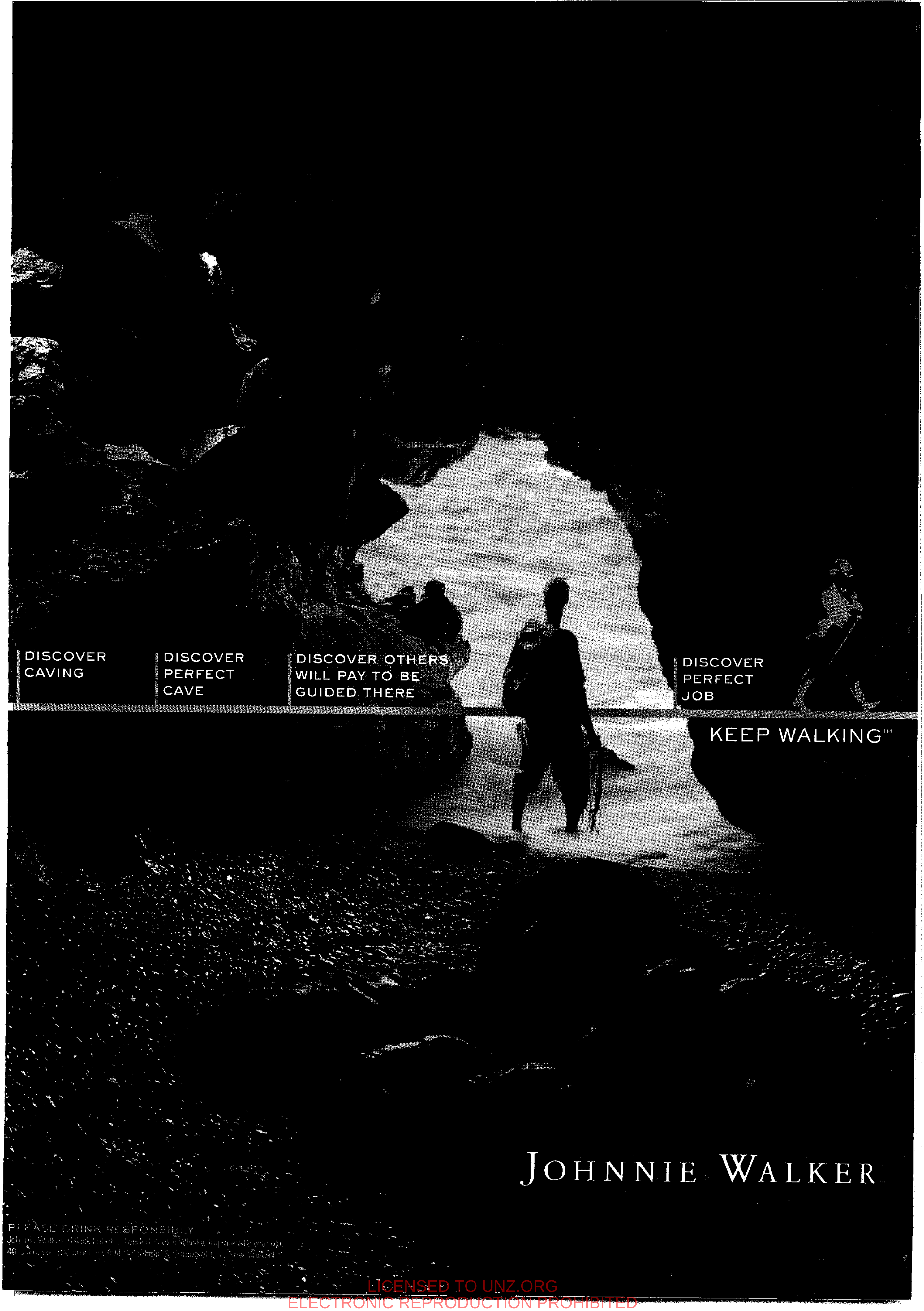
89 Briefly Noted
*John Updike* 90 *New novels by Andrew Sean Greer and Hanif Kureishi.*

POEMS

*Linda Gregg* 36 "The Otherness"
*Charles Wright* 68 "A Short History of My Life"

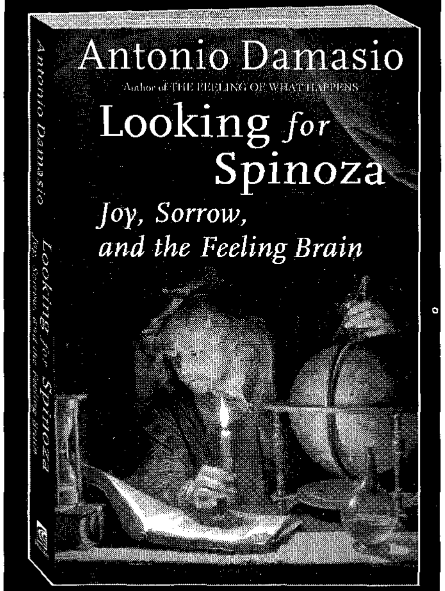
COVER *"Mush!," by Harry Bliss* THE BACK PAGE *"And the Winner Is . . ."*
DRAWINGS *Mick Stevens, David Sipress, Erik Hilgerdt, P. S. Mueller, Gahan Wilson, Tom Cheney, Charles Barsotti, George Booth, Roz Chast, Barbara Smaller, P. C. Vey, Leo Cullum, Danny Shanahan, Bruce Eric Kaplan, Robert Weber, Michael Maslin, Michael Crawford, Frank Cotham, Sam Gross, Matthew Diffee, Victoria Roberts, Jack Ziegler, John O'Brien*

*www.newyorker.com*


DISCOVER CAVING
DISCOVER PERFECT CAVE
DISCOVER OTHERS WILL PAY TO BE GUIDED THERE
DISCOVER PERFECT JOB
KEEP WALKING™
JOHNNIE WALKER

PLEASE DRINK RESPONSIBLY
Johnnie Walker Black Label. Blended Scotch Whisky. Imported. 12 year old.
40 [illegible] alc./vol. (80 proof) [illegible] Schieffelin & Somerset Co., New York, N.Y.

"REMARKABLE."*


Antonio Damasio
Author of THE FEELING OF WHAT HAPPENS
Looking for Spinoza
Joy, Sorrow, and the Feeling Brain

"In clear, accessible and at times eloquent prose, Damasio is outlining nothing less than a new vision of the human soul . . . Spinoza would be proud."
—*San Francisco Chronicle*

"Damasio has the rare talent of rendering science intelligible while also being gifted in philosophy, literature, and wit."
—**Los Angeles Times*

"Exceptionally engaging and profoundly gratifying . . . Its erudition and wisdom provide a powerful statement."
—*Nature*

NEW IN PAPERBACK

Harcourt
www.harcourtbooks.com

# CONTRIBUTORS

Jerome Groopman ("The Grief Industry," p. 30) is the Recanati Professor of Medicine at Harvard. His book "The Anatomy of Hope: How People Prevail in the Face of Illness" has just been published.

Tad Friend ("River of Angels," p. 42) writes the Letter from California for the magazine.

Field Maloney (The Talk of the Town, p. 27) is a member of the magazine's editorial staff.

Frank Gannon (Shouts & Murmurs, p. 40) is the author of four books, including "Midlife Irish," a memoir, which comes out in paperback in February.

James Surowiecki (The Financial Page, p. 28) is a staff writer. His book "The Wisdom of Crowds" will be published in May.

Charles Wright (Poem, p. 68) is a Pulitzer Prize-winning poet. His new collection of poems, "Buffalo Yoga," will be published in April.

Ian Parker ("Victims and Volunteers," p. 50) has been writing for the magazine since 1994.

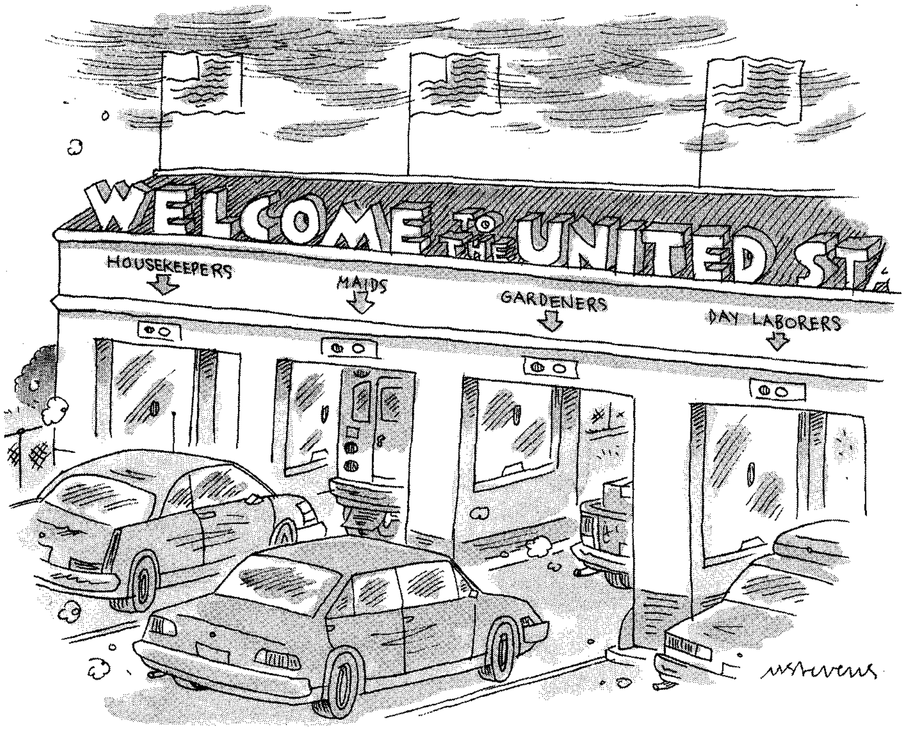
Burkhard Bilger ("Twin Peaks," p. 62) is a staff writer and the author of "Noodling for Flatheads."

Antonya Nelson (Fiction, p. 74) is the recipient of the 2003 Rea Award for the Short Story. Her latest fiction collection is "Female Trouble."

David Denby (The Current Cinema, p. 84), a film critic for the magazine, has just published "American Sucker," a memoir.

John Updike (Books, p. 90) is a regular contributor of fiction, poetry, and criticism. His most recent book is "The Early Stories: 1953-1975."

Harry Bliss (Cover) is a cartoonist and a cover artist. He has illustrated six children's books, including "Diary of a Worm" and "Don't Forget to Come Back!," which will be out next month. ♦



# THE MAIL

## IMMUNIZING AMERICA

Readers of Atul Gawande's compelling article on polio-eradication efforts in India (Medical Dispatch, January 12th) might conclude that resistance to vaccination is primarily a symptom of ignorance and poverty in the Third World. Unfortunately, more and more parents in the United States—between one and three per cent—are obtaining "philosophical exemptions" from state inoculation laws. Twenty years ago, anti-vaccination sentiments were difficult to find in this country. Today, a wide range of opponents—libertarians, partisans of alternative medicine, those who mistakenly link vaccination to autism—are challenging immunization programs. These well-meaning but ill-informed parents, many clustered in "hot spots," expose their children to such scourges as measles, rubella, and whooping cough. Tragically, they've helped to make permanent eradication of these diseases in this country an increasingly elusive goal. If these parents were to travel to India, as Gawande did, and witness the horrors of rampant infectious disease, many of them would choose differently.
*Jacob M. Appel*
*Adjunct Assistant Professor of Community Health, Brown University*
*Providence, R.I.*

## HALLIBURTON'S WAR

James Surowiecki writes that "no serious person believes that the United States launched a war for Halliburton" (The Financial Page, January 12th). Surely this adventure had more than one rationale, but, since an honest, well-informed fear of an imminent W.M.D. threat evidently wasn't one of them, what's left? An altruistic attempt to foster democracy, by a President who claimed to have an aversion to nation-building of any kind? Surowiecki is right that complaints about corruption "miss the point," but only because small-scale bid rigging is unnecessary when you've put yourself on the inside track. For corporations with past or present ties to the Administration, this open-ended war and its endless aftermath mean the business opportunity of a lifetime.
*Malcolm MacKenzie*
*Newton, Mass.*

## DAMAGED DOGS

In Cathleen Schine's heartbreaking article about her intractable dog, Buster, she tells how a private rescue group saved him from euthanasia and placed him in her home ("Dog Trouble," January 5th). It is always sad when rescuers, in their urgency to save every animal, recklessly subject unsuspecting human caregivers to a life of crisis, psychological trauma, and guilt—not to mention physical peril. There are some who refuse to admit that certain animals—because of abuse and neglect or a twist of genetics—simply won't make suitable pets. An ill-advised placement may save one dog today (if only for a short time), but it can sour the adopter—as well as her friends and family—on shelter animals forever. Buster's euthanasia was humane and gentle. Schine should stop beating herself up for what was a Herculean effort to repair what could not be repaired.
*Lisa Fine*
*Executive Director, Berkeley-East Bay Humane Society*
*Berkeley, Calif.*

## THE BATTLE OF THE CRATER

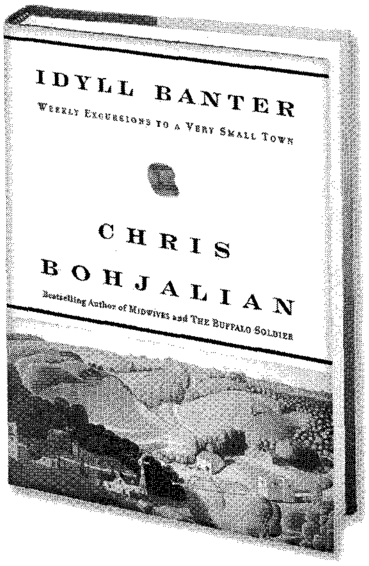
Reviewing "Cold Mountain," David Denby writes that at Petersburg the Union Army placed "dynamite" under Confederate positions (The Current Cinema, December 22nd). The Battle of the Crater took place in July, 1864; dynamite was not patented until 1867. The explosive used by the Pennsylvania Veteran Volunteer Infantry was black powder.
*Dan Graham*
*Oak Hill, Va.*

•

*Letters should be sent with the writer's name, address, and daytime phone number via e-mail to themail@newyorker.com. They can also be faxed to 212-286-5047. Letters may be edited for length and clarity, and may be published in any medium; we regret that owing to the volume of correspondence we cannot reply to every letter.*

#1 NEW YORK TIMES
BESTSELLING AUTHOR

GET AWAY TO IT ALL.


IDYLL BANTER
Weekly Excursions to a Very Small Town
CHRIS BOHJALIAN
Bestselling Author of Midwives and The Buffalo Soldier

Eighteen years ago Chris Bohjalian and his wife said *so long Brooklyn, hello New England.* Since then, he's been chronicling the simple life in Lincoln, Vermont, where the folks share certain universalities with the residents of small towns across America: kinship, neighborliness, and an often-unappreciated tolerance for eccentricity.

Now Bohjalian brings the real, distinctively American characters of Lincoln to life in IDYLL BANTER, a diary of how this writer's life—and life in America—has changed over the past decade.

**"Chris Bohjalian is a terrific columnist—thoughtful and thought-provoking. Just like me! No, really, this guy is good."**—DAVE BARRY

BOOK sense **A BookSense 76 Pick**

HARMONY BOOKS
Also Available From RANDOM HOUSE AUDIO
ChrisBohjalian.com
A Member of The Crown Publishing Group
Wherever books are sold

# GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

| S | M | T | W | T | F | S |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | | | | |

*For expanded events listings, please visit www.newyorker.com/goingson.*

## THIS WEEK
## TOP PICK

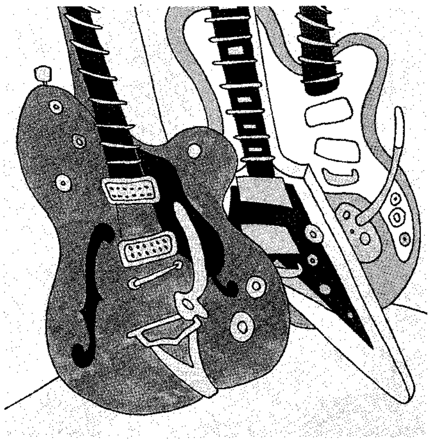
Some scholars believe that the guitar is a descendant of the kithara, the lyre favored by Apollo. Others trace it back to long-necked lutes in Mesopotamia. The ongoing New York Guitar Festival celebrates the mysterious instrument with a two-part guitar marathon. The early show, at 2, explores classical and folk with Paul O'Dette (on the lute), David Starobin (playing a smaller, peanut-shaped nineteenth-century guitar), and others. In the late show, starting at 7, players including the Brazilian guitarist Vinicius Cantuária and the visionary fretman David Torn bring the guitar into the twenty-first century. (92nd Street Y, Jan. 25; see Night Life.)

## OUT ON A LIMB

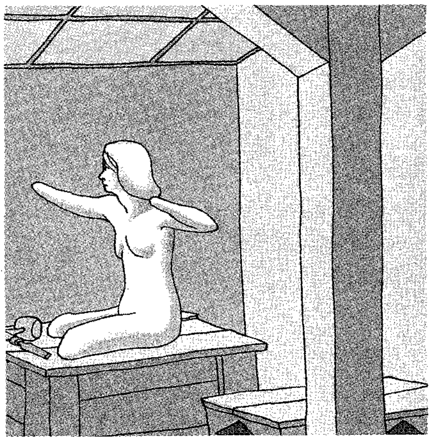
The British artist Marc Quinn—whose "Self" (1991), a self-portrait bust made of his own frozen blood, is already iconic in the way of Jeff Koons's steel bunny—seems to aim his high-concept sculptures at the art-history textbooks of the future. His new work, "The Complete Marbles," consists of carvings made from body casts of people with missing or deformed limbs; disability is conflated with the fragmentary state of ancient statuary. (Mary Boone; see Art.)

## ARRIBA EN POINTE!

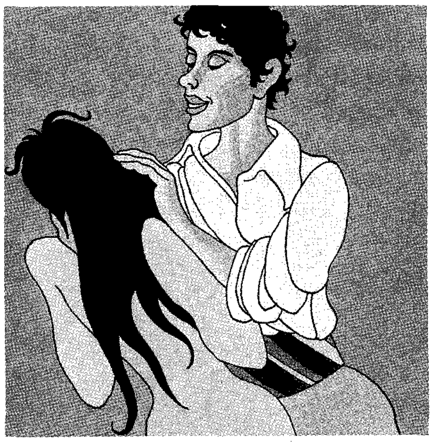
For some reason, American Ballet Theatre has a particularly spectacular roster of dancers from Latin America and Spain. So expect bravura performances at the Apollo Theatre, where the company is putting on a benefit for its dance-education program at Casita Maria, the city's oldest settlement house serving the Hispanic community. Angel Corella will perform David Parson's "Caught," always a showstopper for a hunky guy. Herman and Erica Cornejo, a brother-and-sister act, have the opportunity to chew the scenery in the pas de deux from the Kirov's "Flames of Paris." And the kids from Casita Maria will première a tango-inspired ballet. (Apollo Theatre, Jan. 27; see Dance.)



*The New York Guitar Festival's "Guitar Marathon," at the 92nd Street Y.*

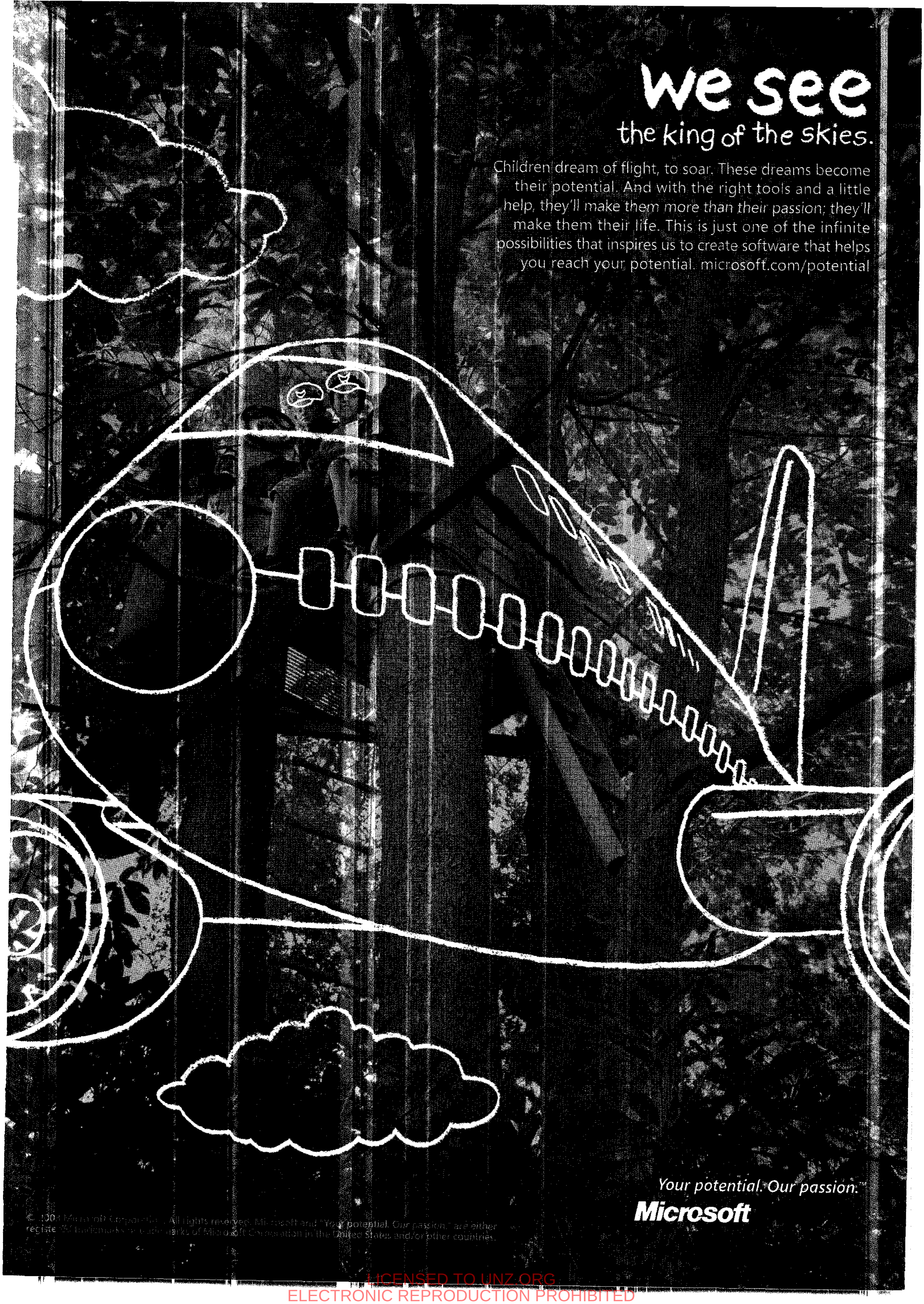


*Marc Quinn's new sculptures, currently showing at Mary Boone.*



GAHAN WILSON

*Dancers from American Ballet Theatre appear at the Apollo.*



we see
the king of the skies.

Children dream of flight, to soar. These dreams become their potential. And with the right tools and a little help, they'll make them more than their passion; they'll make them their life. This is just one of the infinite possibilities that inspires us to create software that helps you reach your potential. microsoft.com/potential

*Your potential. Our passion.*™

**Microsoft**

© 2004 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. Microsoft and "Your potential. Our passion." are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries.

*The Bindlestiff Family Cirkus presents "High Heels and Red Noses" at the Palace of Variety.*

## THE THEATRE
## OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

*Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.*

**FIDDLER ON THE ROOF**
Alfred Molina is Tevye, Randy Graff is Golde, and Barbara Barrie is Yente in a new Broadway production of the musical, directed by David Leveaux. Previews begin Jan. 23. (Minskoff, 200 W. 45th St. 212-307-4100.)

**THE MYSTERIES**
The Biblical stories of Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, Abraham and Isaac, the Flood, and the Passion as rendered by Dario Fo, Mikhail Bulgakov, Tony Harrison, and others come together in a play directed by Brian Kulick. Bill Buell leads the cast. One preview on Jan. 21. Opens Jan. 22 at 8. (Classic Stage, 136 E. 13th St. 212-677-4210.)

**NEW YORK GILBERT & SULLIVAN PLAYERS**
The group celebrates its thirtieth season with productions of "Iolanthe," "H.M.S. Pinafore," and "The Mikado." All of them are directed by Albert Bergeret, who also leads a twenty-five-piece orchestra at each performance. "The Mikado" plays Jan. 23-25. (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 212-581-1212.)

**NYMPH ERRANT**
Cole Porter's musical about a girl fresh out of boarding school who roves Europe, looking for romance, receives a revival at the Medicine Show Theatre. Directed by Barbara Vann. Opens Jan. 22 at 8. (549 W. 52nd St. 212-262-4216.)

**SUITCASE: OR, THAT RESEMBLE FLIES FROM A DISTANCE**
Melissa James Gibson, author of the play "[sic]," brings a new work to the SoHo Rep, a comedy about two women who can't finish their dissertations and won't let their boyfriends into their apartments. Directed by Daniel Aukin. Previews begin Jan. 22. Opens Jan. 24 at 7:30. (46 Walker St. 212-868-4444.)

**THEY WROTE THAT?**
The songwriters Barry Mann and Cynthia Weil (they wrote the Animals' hit "We've Gotta Get Out of This Place" and Dolly Parton's "Here You Come Again") star in a musical biography recapping their career in pop music. Directed by Richard Maltby, Jr., with sets by Neil Patel. In previews. (McGinn/Cazale Theatre, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. 212-239-6200.)

**VALHALLA**
New York Theatre Workshop presents a new play by Paul Rudnick that contrasts the lives and passions of the Wagner-loving Mad King Ludwig II of Bavaria and a precocious teen-ager in Texas in the nineteen-forties. Directed by Christopher Ashley. In previews. (79 E. 4th St. 212-239-6200.)

## OPENED RECENTLY

**ABUNDANCE**
Marty Pottenger turns hard facts into drama; her play "City Water Tunnel #3," about a sixty-four-mile-long water tunnel, won an Obie. Her new play is about economic inequality in America. After spending three years interviewing the rich, the poor, and the in-between, Pottenger assembled a revealing work about the role that money plays in American lives. A cast of five portray her interview subjects, anchored by Joe Gioco, who's devastating as a depraved and sickly billionaire. (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 212-924-0077. Closes Jan. 24.)

**THE ARCHITECTURE OF LOSS**
New York Theatre Workshop presents a new play by Julia Cho, about an errant father and a missing son. Directed by Chay Yew. (83 E. 4th St. 212-460-5475. Closes Jan. 25.)

**AUNT DAN AND LEMON**
In the New Group's revival of Wallace Shawn's haunting and transcendent 1985 play, Lili Taylor plays Leonora, or Lemon, a woman who cultivates the garden of her memory in flashbacks dominated by a loquacious family friend she calls Aunt Dan (Kristen Johnston). Aunt Dan argues for the human face of fascism and reveals her desire for Henry Kissinger—whom she regards as one of the most eligible bachelors in the world (the political context is the nineteen-seventies). Just as Aunt Dan yearns to be overwhelmed by force—a male force—Lemon secretly desires to be overwhelmed by Aunt Dan. Directed by Scott Elliott. (Reviewed in our issue of 1/5/04.) (Clurman, 410 W. 42nd St. 212-239-6200.)

**DEMON BABY**
The Clubbed Thumb theatre company presents a new play by Erin Courtney, about a homesick American wife in London who acquires a diabolical imaginary friend while her husband is at work. (Ohio, 66 Wooster St. 212-868-4444. Through Jan. 31.)

**DOÑA ROSITA THE SPINSTER**
A new production of Federico García Lorca's drama, adapted by Gwynne Edwards and directed by Ernest Johns, plays at the Jean Cocteau Repertory. (Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery, at Bond St. 212-677-0060.)

**FIVE FLIGHTS**
Joanna P. Adler and Alice Ripley lead the cast in a Rattlestick Playwrights Theatre production of a new comedy by Adam Bock, about siblings who must decide what to do with their father's aviary after his death. Directed by Kent Nicholson. (224 Waverly Pl. 212-868-4444.)

**HIGH HEELS AND RED NOSES**
The Bindlestiff Family Cirkus calls this production a "conflagration of circus and burlesque." As in any proper burlesque show, there are moments of questionable taste, but the performers' skills—there's even a real sword swallower—are presented with just enough irony to make the evening smart as well as saucy. (Palace of Variety, 125 W. 42nd St. 877-246-3537.)

RUVEN AFANADOR

**KING COWBOY RUFUS RULES THE UNIVERSE**
Richard Foreman's Ontological Theatre presents a new production in which an ersatz President George W. Bush is attacked by bears, babies, and statues of the dead. With Juliana Francis, Jay Smith, and T. Ryder Smith. (Reviewed in this issue.) (St. Mark's In-the-Bowery, Second Ave. at 10th St. 212-533-4650.)

**MERCURY: THE AFTERLIFE AND TIMES OF A ROCK GOD**
Fans hoping for Losers' Lounge-ish covers of "We Will Rock You" and "Bohemian Rhapsody" in this tribute to Queen's late lead singer, Freddie Mercury (Amir Darvish), will be disappointed; Charles Messina's powerful one-man show focusses on the man rather than the music. Messina explores Mercury's fractured identity as an upper-class Arab, a tortured prep-school boarder, a closeted homosexual, a drug addict (the set features a plate heaped with enough cocaine to make Tony Montana balk), and a high-camp celebrity. Fusing Kafkaesque reckoning with Greek tragedy, the script surprises at times, as when it depicts an AIDS-stricken Mercury pleading for salvation before God. Directed by Messina, with period-perfect costumes. (Triad Theatre, 158 W. 72nd St. 212-352-3101.)

**NEVER GONNA DANCE**
Based on the classic 1936 movie "Swing Time," starring Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, this effervescent new musical is a scrapbook of Depression-era reality made Art Deco shiny. Directed by Michael Greif and choreographed by Jerry Mitchell. (12/15/03) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 212-239-6200.)

**PERSIANS**
Aeschylus' drama about the Persian Wars receives a new production at the Pearl, starring Joanne Camp, Robert Hock, Sean McNall, and Scott Whitehurst. Directed by Shepard Sobel. (80 St. Marks Pl. 212-598-9802. Closes Feb. 8.)

**THESE VERY SERIOUS JOKES**
The playful, provocative Target Margin company is back, with a new translation by Douglas Langworthy of the first part of Goethe's "Faust." The title, taken from Goethe's own description of his work, is particularly apt for this production, which brings out the play's humor by using well-chosen contemporary language, and making effective staging choices, such as the decision to have three guys in khakis and tinsel-fringed halos play the angels. Directed with verve by David Herskovits. (HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., near Spring St. 212-868-4444. Through Jan. 31.)

**WOMEN ON FIRE**
Judith Ivey plays eleven different characters in a one-woman show by Irene O'Garden. Directed by Mary B. Robinson. (Cherry Lane Theatre, 38 Commerce St. 212-239-6200.)

**WONDERFUL TOWN**
The musical from 1953, about two spirited Ohio sisters' adventures in Greenwich Village, is a buoyant, beautifully staged revival that gives us back a thrilling glimpse of the gaiety, wit, confidence, and craft of the American musical in its populist heyday. (Al Hirschfeld, 302 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200.)

---

## ALSO PLAYING

**AVENUE Q**
Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200.

**THE BOY FROM OZ**
Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200.

**CAROLINE, OR CHANGE**
Public, 425 Lafayette St. 212-239-6200. (Closes Feb. 1.)

**CAT ON A HOT TIN ROOF**
Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200.

**GOLDA'S BALCONY**
Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 212-239-6200.

**HAIRSPRAY**
Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 212-307-4100.

**I AM MY OWN WIFE**
Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200.

**LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS**
Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 212-239-6200.

**MAMMA MIA!**
Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 212-563-5544.

**MOVIN' OUT**
Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 212-307-4100.

**PRIVATE JOKES, PUBLIC PLACES**
Theatre at the Center for Architecture, 536 LaGuardia Pl. 212-239-6200.

**THE PRODUCERS**
St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 212-239-6200.

**THE REGARD EVENING**
Peter Norton Space, 555 W. 42nd St. 212-244-7529. (Closes Feb. 1.)

**THE RETREAT FROM MOSCOW**
Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200.

**TABOO**
Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200. (Closes Feb. 8.)

**THE THING ABOUT MEN**
Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 212-239-6200.

**WICKED**
Gershwin, 222 W. 51st St. 212-307-4100.

---

## DANCE

**NEW YORK CITY BALLET**
The third week of the Balanchine centennial celebration includes a triple bill of his early masterworks "Apollo," "Serenade," and "Prodigal Son" on his birthday, January 22, and the première of "Double Feature"—the season's only new work. Choreographed by the Broadway director and choreographer Susan Stroman, "Double Feature" is an evening-length narrative ballet (her first) that celebrates Mr. B.'s dalliance with the Great White Way and pays homage to silent film—a nod, she says, to Balanchine's famous characterization of ballet dancers as a "silent minority." The ballet's first act, "The Blue Necklace," is a melodrama à la "The Kid," set to "Blue Skies" and other songs by Irving Berlin. "Makin' Whoopee!," the second act, which evokes a Buster Keaton comedy, takes the playful melodies of Walter Donaldson (the composer of the title song) as its score. ♦ Jan. 21 at 8: "Chopiniana" and "Harlequinade." ♦ Jan. 22 at 8: "Apollo," "Serenade," and "Prodigal Son." ♦ Jan. 23 at 8, Jan. 24 at 2 and 8, and Jan. 25 at 3: "Double Feature." ♦ Jan. 27 at 7:30: "Chopiniana," "Prodigal Son," and "Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No. 2." Through Feb. 29. (New York State Theatre, Lincoln Center. 212-870-5570.)

**"DANCE ARRIBA!"**
American Ballet Theatre and Casita Maria present an evening of dance (see This Week). (Apollo, 253 W. 125th St. For performance-only tickets, call 212-307-7171. For benefit tickets, call 212-477-3030, ext. 3239. Jan. 27 at 7:30.)

**JAMES SEWELL BALLET**
In its Joyce Theatre début, this eight-member company from Minneapolis performs three dances by its founder, an alumnus of the Feld Ballet. Sewell challenges the classical code in sometimes obvious, sometimes adventurous ways. In "Barrage," the serenity of a traditional ballet is interrupted when a stagehand walks on to fix a light, setting off a series of mishaps and interruptions, as the music cuts from Tchaikovsky to Lauryn Hill to Fatboy Slim. In "Moving Works," the dancers highlight the complexity of a clashing score—a collage of Bach, Baaba Maal, Combustible Edison, and others. And in the gentler selection, "Loves Remembered," set to six lieder, a man and a woman strip down to their nude leotards, slowly intertwine, then part, ending in separate spotlights. (175 Eighth Ave. 212-242-0800. Jan. 20-23 at 8 and Jan. 24-25 at 2 and 8.)

**K. J. HOLMES AND BEBE MILLER COMPANY**
Two choreographers who appreciate the time it takes to cultivate a dance offer works in progress. In "Salvage," the second half of an evening-length piece whose first part was performed in 1999, Holmes, Lisa Gonzales, and Kayvon Pourazar scatter a trail of dry leaves as they dance to music by Dave Douglas, Miles Davis, and John Zorn. In "Landing/Place," expected to have its première in 2005, Bebe Miller and her dancers perform with a video backdrop of familiar locations behind them and a digital motion-capture screen to the front of them, forming unexpected juxtapositions. (Danspace Project at St. Marks-In-the-Bowery, Second Ave. at 10th St. 212-674-8194. Jan. 22-25 at 8:30.)

LOOKING FOR LESS DRAMA?
YAHOO! personals
yahoo.com • click personals

ADVERTISEMENT
MAKE A DATE
WITH YOUR 2004
NEW YORKER DESK DIARY TODAY

THE NEW YORKER
CHRIS NEAL

Plus, receive FREE personalization when you order your 2004 Desk Diary online at:
WWW.CARTOONBANK.COM
To order over the phone please call
1-866-494-6153.

CARTOONBANK.COM
*A New Yorker Magazine Company*
145 PALISADE STREET, SUITE 373, DOBBS FERRY, NY 10522
© 2003 BY THE CONDÉ NAST PUBLICATIONS INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

AUDITIONS HELD 24/7.
YAHOO!® hotjobs
yahoo.com click HotJobs

**PHILIPPA KAYE COMPANY**
A strong début season marked by technical complexity and understated wit. In "Ritual for a Non-Repeating Universe," the troupe dances as if guided by unseen forces. Crayons gripped in the dancers' fists record their motions on the walls and floor, and when the lights go out, glow sticks tied to their shins and forearms leave fluorescent traces in the air. "Big Monster," similar in mood, has a more raucous score and approaches slapstick at times. But it's "No Wake," an intentionally self-mocking, structured improvisation for Kaye, that gets the big laughs. (Williamsburg Art Nexus, 205 N. 7th St. 718-599-7997. Jan. 22-24 at 8 and Jan. 25 at 5.)

**MIGUEL GUTIERREZ AND THE POWERFUL PEOPLE**
On New Year's Eve in 2001, the dancer Miguel Gutierrez, who recently won a Bessie for his work with John Jasperse, blindfolded himself and wore earplugs for twenty-four hours. This experiment fuelled his new dance, "Damnation Road," an exploration of the interior landscape of terror, in which Michelle Boulé, blindfolded, moves among four other dancers to an ominous vocal and electronic score. Set by Christoph Draeger. (The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 212-255-5793, ext. 11. Jan. 22-24 and Jan. 27 at 8. Through Jan. 31.)

**SUE BERNHARD DANCEWORKS**
In a program entitled "Blue Triangle," named after the symbol used by the Nazis to identify immigrants, the nineteen-member company performs four new works by Bernhard, including "Precipice," an anti-war work, and Laurel Lynch performs Margie Gillis's solo "Bloom." (Merce Cunningham Studio, 55 Bethune St. 212-924-0077. Jan. 23 at 9, Jan. 24 at 8, and Jan. 25 at 7:30.)

**DANCE ON CAMERA FESTIVAL 2004**
The final weekend of Lincoln Center's annual festival features the haunting animated short "Destino"—a collaboration between Salvador Dali and Walt Disney in which a spindly yet sensual woman melts into Dali landscapes—and "Dame la Mano," Heddy Honigmann's vivid new documentary about Cuban exiles in Queens, who move to the sharp, sensual beat of the clave as they cook, drive, and dance. (Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center. 212-875-5600. See www.filmlinc.com for a complete schedule. Through Jan. 24.)

**LUNAR NEW YEAR FESTIVAL OF CHINESE DANCE, MUSIC AND PEKING OPERA**
The New York Chinese Cultural Center celebrates the arrival of the Year of the Monkey with traditional dances performed in elaborate costumes by the Chinese Folk Dance Company and guest artists. (Skirball Center for the Performing Arts, 566 LaGuardia Pl. 212-992-8484. Jan. 24 at 2 and 7:30 and Jan. 25 at 2.)

**ROYAL DANISH BALLET**
A delegation from the famous troupe will perform its usual program of greatest hits from the work of August Bournonville, and they are hits indeed: selections from "La Sylphide," "Napoli," "The Flower Festival in Genzano," and other ballets, all showing the speed, buoyancy, and split-millisecond footwork that Bournonville inculcated in the company in the mid-nineteenth century. Two modern works by Tim Rushton complete the program. (Whitman Theatre, Brooklyn College, 718-951-4500. Jan. 25 at 2.)

*Los Lonely Boys play the Bowery Ballroom on Jan. 27.*

DIVYA SRINIVASAN

---

# NIGHT LIFE
## CONCERTS

**NEW YORK GUITAR FESTIVAL**
Jan. 21 at 8: **Alex de Grassi,** who was born in Japan and raised in San Francisco, has a musical background (his grandfather was a violinist in the San Francisco Symphony). He started playing the guitar as a teenager, and during the last quarter century he's become one of the country's top interpretive fingerpicking guitarists. His latest album is "Now and Then: Folk Songs for the 21st Century." (Makor, 35 W. 67th St. 212-601-1000.) Jan. 24 at 8: **Christopher Parkening** (see Classical Music—Recitals). (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St.) Jan. 25 at 2 and 7: A guitar marathon (see This Week). (92nd Street Y.) Jan. 27 at 8: The blues guitarist **John Hammond,** the Los Angeles-based singer **Eleni Mandell,** and the quirky San Francisco group the **Tin Hat Trio** delve into the music of Tom Waits. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 212-501-3330.) (Through Feb. 3. For more information, visit www.newyorkguitarfestival.org.)

**JAYHAWKS**
The Minneapolis foursome led by Mark Olson and Gary Louris, long noted for its authentic Americana, returned to basics on last year's "Rainy Day Music," an album that was embraced by fans and critics alike. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 212-840-2824. Jan. 22-23 at 8.)

**AMERICAN SONGBOOK**
Jan. 23 at 8 and 11: The Broadway vocalist **Darius de Haas** offers his take on the songs of Stevie Wonder. Jan. 24 at 8: **Phil Roy,** who once wrote songs for Aaron Neville, Ray Charles, and Joe Cocker, among many others, makes his Lincoln Center début. (Kaplan Penthouse, 165 W. 65th St. 212-721-6500.)

**IRON MAIDEN**
The crusty British heavy-metal ensemble is back with songs from "Dance of Death," its thirteenth studio album, much to the delight of its leather-clad fans. (Hammerstein Ballroom, Manhattan Center, 311 W. 34th St. 212-307-7171. Jan. 23-24 and Jan. 26-27 at 8.)

**"WINTER SOUL"**
The Brooklyn Academy of Music heats things up with a double bill featuring **Sam Moore,** of the seminal soul duo Sam and Dave, and the young vocalist **Raúl Midón.** (30 Lafayette Ave. 718-636-4100. Jan. 24 at 7:30.)

**COREY HARRIS**
The thirty-four-year-old guitarist started his recording career in 1995 with "Between Midnight and Day," an album of Delta blues. His latest release, "Mississippi to Mali," explores the African roots of the blues through contributions by the Mali superstar Ali Farka Toure and by Shardé Thomas, the granddaughter and protégée of the fife-and-drum master Otha Turner. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 212-864-5400. Jan. 26 at 8.)

---

## CLUBS

*Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it's advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.*

**BAM CAFÉ**
30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-636-4139)—Jan. 23: The vocalist **Pyeng Threadgill,** the daughter of the avant-garde jazz saxophonist and composer Henry Threadgill, has a repertoire that runs from Ornette Coleman to Sly and the Family Stone.

**BARBÈS**
376 9th St., Park Slope, Brooklyn (718-965-9177)—Jan. 22: The **Howard Fishman** quartet. Led by the guitarist and gravelly-voiced singer Fishman, a Connecticut native who spent his musically formative years in New Orleans, this quartet spins out an eclectic mix of small-group swing, early American folk, and even indie rock.

**B. B. KING BLUES CLUB & GRILL**
237 W. 42nd St. (212-997-4144)—Jan. 23: **Blue Öyster Cult,** Long Island's original classic-rock group and the authors of the irresistible seventies radio staple "Don't Fear the Reaper." Jan. 24: The bygone days of heavy metal are back for a night as die-hard tribute bands face off. The show is called "Tribute Wars VII," and the bands are **Mr. Brownstone** (representing Guns 'N' Roses), **Unchained** (David Lee Roth-era Van Halen), **Parasite** (vintage Kiss), and **Livewire** (AC/DC's schoolboy prurience). Jan. 26: **C. J. Chenier,** son of the legendary zydeco accordionist Clifton Chenier, upholds the traditions of Creole dance music. Chenier straps on his father's old fifty-pound piano-key accordion and leads his Red Hot Louisiana Band through waltzes, two-steps, and joist-shaking rhythms guaranteed to make dancers kick off their shoes (and do the old man proud).

**BOWERY BALLROOM**
6 Delancey St. (212-533-2111)—Jan. 24-25: The alternative-country outfit the **Old 97's.** Jan. 27: **Los Lonely Boys** are three young brothers from West Texas whose heroes include Stevie Ray Vaughan and Ritchie Valens. Their music is a soulful mix of razor-sharp blues-guitar riffs and impassioned Tex-Mex rock. They count among their ardent fans the country star Willie Nelson, and they recorded their eponymous début at his studio in Austin.

**JOE'S PUB**
425 Lafayette St. (212-539-8777)—Jan. 24: The veteran soul vocalist **Bettye LaVette.**

**MERCURY LOUNGE**
217 E. Houston St. (212-260-4700)—Jan. 21: The Southern rock of **Cross Canadian Ragweed.** Jan. 26: **Brian Jonestown Massacre** constructs intense psychedelic soundscapes.

**NORTHSIX**
66 N. 6th St., Williamsburg, Brooklyn (718-599-5103)—Jan. 21: The singer-songwriter **Devendra Banhart.** Jan. 23: **Bob Mould,** once a member of the American punk band Hüsker Dü and of the celebrated alternative trio Sugar, took a break from the music game at the end of the nineties to fulfill his passion for professional wrestling. (No joke: he has served as a consultant to the World Championship Wrestling organization.) More recently he started experimenting with electronic music, swapping guitars for samplers and synthesizers, and released an album under the name LoudBomb. Most Saturday nights he can be found at the 9:30 Club, in Wash-

ington, D.C., spinning records with the producer Richard Morel (together they use the name Blowoff). He's also at work on a new album of guitar-based music, and here he'll be in an acoustic solo setting.

**RODEO BAR**
375 Third Ave., at 27th St. (212-683-6500)—Jan. 23: A night of hard-driving honky-tonk music with **Wayne (the Train) Hancock.**

**SOUTHPAW**
125 Fifth Ave., Park Slope (718-230-0236)—Jan. 23: Earlier in his career the guitarist **Popa Chubby** (né Ted Horowitz) toured with the punk innovator Richard Hell, and during the nineties he led the house band at the now defunct East Side juke joint Manny's Car Wash. He's a proponent of what he calls the New York City blues. Jan. 24: **Wayne (the Train) Hancock** (see the Rodeo Bar).

## JAZZ AND STANDARDS

**BIRDLAND**
315 W. 44th St. (212-581-3080)—Jan. 22-24: **Branford Marsalis's** boutique label, Marsalis Music, distributed by Rounder Records, has an impressive roster, including the guitarist **Doug Wamble,** the saxophonist **Miguel Zenon,** and the pianist **Harry Connick, Jr.** (with his instrumental quartet). Marsalis's own band joins its labelmates for a turn in the spotlight.

**BLUE NOTE**
131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (212-475-8592)—**Charlie Haden,** the jazz world's most astute bassist, duets with three of the genre's most responsive guitarists—**Bill Frisell** (Jan. 20-21), **John Scofield** (Jan. 22-23), and **Jim Hall** (Jan. 24-25).

**CARLYLE HOTEL**
Madison Ave. at 76th St. (212-744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a snug, windowless enclave in the doorman district, features discreet waiters, wrap-around murals, and through Jan. 31, **Ute Lemper.**

**IRIDIUM**
1650 Broadway, at 51st St. (212-582-2121)—Through Jan. 25: The guitarist **Pat Martino's** album "Think Tank" was an event last year, thanks in part to its all-star lineup. A few of those heavyweights, including the pianist **Gonzalo Rubalcaba** and the saxophonist **Joe Lovano,** join Martino here, along with the bassist **James Genus** and the drummer **Lenny White.** Mondays belong to the electric-guitar innovator **Les Paul.**

**JAZZ STANDARD**
116 E. 27th St. (212-576-2232)—Jan. 22-25: With the death of Tommy Flanagan, **Kenny Barron** may now assume the role of dean of modern jazz pianists. Some of Barron's most bracing work is done with his small groups. His quintet here includes the inventive young vibraphonist **Stefon Harris,** who will also be performing with his own, electrified Blackout band.

**JOE'S PUB**
425 Lafayette St. (212-539-8777)—Jan. 21-22: The young British vocal sensation **Jamie Cullum** serves up a taste of what's been setting U.K. critics aflutter. Also on Jan. 22: **Mark Murphy.** There are few authentic bebop singers still with us; Murphy, active since the mid-fifties, has not only never given up the cause, he's at the top of his game. Jan. 23: Spearheading the new wave of postmodern European jazz, **E.S.T.** (the Esbjörn Svensson Trio) is Scandinavia's answer to our Bad Plus: free spirits willing to go beyond the genre's boundaries. Jan. 27: The **Preservation Hall Jazz Band** will let you feel like a tourist in the Big Easy without leaving town. The band may be missing some original members, but everyone involved can still channel the primordial urge to stomp.

**SATALLA**
37 W. 26th St. (212-576-1155)—Jan. 23: Long before Cuba was rediscovered as the musical promised land, the master Latin percussionist **Carlos (Patato) Valdes** popularized its infectious rhythms. The spirit—and palms—of the septuagenarian Valdes are still more than willing.

**VILLAGE VANGUARD**
178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (212-255-4037)—Through Jan. 25: The **Terence Blanchard** sextet. He may be better known these days as Spike Lee's musical collaborator, but Blanchard isn't about to retreat

Humidifier & Purifier.
Two in one.

No.1 in Germany and Europe. Perfected over 20 years.
Worldwide unique technology. No need for filterpads.

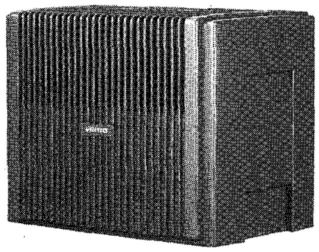
$ 499.99 (LW 44) - different sizes available. Patent-No. 5,894,001.

Venta offers humidification without filterpads. Water is the filter. • hygenic • simple • easy maintenance • silent • very cost efficient • elegant design.

European consumers have made Germany's Venta-Airwasher Europe's Nr.1 bestseller. Now available all over the US.

Famous customers are already enjoying the benefits of the Venta-Airwasher: e. g. Sony Europe, Audi, Porsche, British Airways, adidas AG, McDonalds, Panasonic, Carnegie Hall (40 units).

Distributed in 16 countries. Ask your dealer for this Mercedes-class quality product.



The Venta-Airwasher®
It's so simple.®
Made in Germany

Venta-Airwasher purifies breathing air by washing it with water. Automatically adds humidity by cold evaporation, recognized as the best technique.

No endless cost of replacing clogged, bacteria-ridden filterpads. No smell of moldy filters, no problems with white dust.

*"Wherever I perform in the world: my agents are required to provide Venta-Airwasher because my priceless violin needs the best possible environment. Only Venta gives me the peace of mind that the air humidification will be perfect."* Nigel Kennedy, London

Venta offers 10 year warranty.
Reddot design award winner 2003.

We make one product.
We make it to perfection. For over 20 years.

Available at **selected** retail stores.
Please call for a complete list of dealers.

ZABAR'S
BED BATH & BEYOND
ACE Hardware
S.FELDMAN HOUSEWARES
buybuy BABY
True Value
GRACIOUS HOME
fortunoff

Venta-Airwasher LLC., 180 Stanley Street, Elk Grove Village, IL 60007, Tel. (847) 758 9598, Fax: (847) 758 9597

Test the Venta-Airwasher cost-free.
Free shipping anywhere in the US. Try the Airwasher in your home for 14 days. If you are not fully satisfied, we will have the Airwasher picked up from your home via UPS and your credit card will not be charged.

Name:
Address:
City: State/Zip:

Call Today Toll Free: 1-888-333-8218

www.Venta-Airwasher.com

The uninterrupted, perfect moment...

You and a book. No telephones. No television.
Just the sound of the ocean.

Some people feel as if this extraordinary place was created just for them. In many ways it was. Here you'll stay in a thatched-roof hale. Snorkel in pristine waters or play on secluded beaches. So come, to a place that not only separates you from the rest of the world, but distances you from all your cares.

KonaVillage RESORT

Hawaii as it was meant to be at Historic Ka'upulehu
PO Box 1299, Kailua-Kona, Hawaii 96745 Phone: (808) 325-5555 Fax: (808) 325-5124
(800) 367-5290 www.konavillage.com

from active duty in the clubs anytime soon. He is a dazzling post-bop trumpeter and a bandleader with a sixth sense for finding quick-witted young players. The **Vanguard Jazz Orchestra** holds sway on Mondays.

## ART

## MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

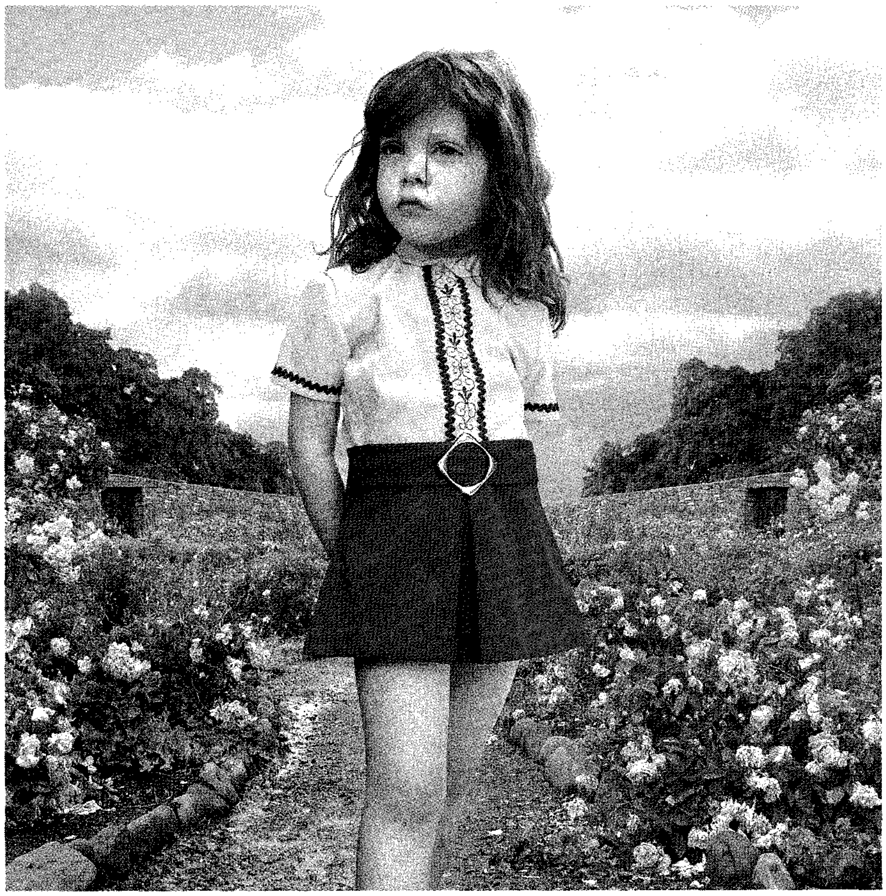
**METROPOLITAN MUSEUM**
Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (212-879-5500)—What's a widower to do when his daughters elope with the family's chauffeur and electrician? Grenville L. Winthrop turned to collecting, amassing more than four thousand objects that he later donated to his alma mater. But, despite the fact that the collection was assembled practically across the street from the Met, this is its first New York viewing. Winthrop was partial to classic French painting, and **"A Private Passion: Nineteenth-Century Paintings and Drawings from the Grenville L. Winthrop Collection, Harvard University"** includes a stunning David portrait of Emperor Napoléon I, a virtually photographic Prud'hon, "Study of a Seated Man," and the rich-hued "Odalisque and Slave," by Ingres. Most enchanting, though, are the "reductions" from Rodin's "Burghers of Calais," which look modern in context. Through Jan. 25. ♦ **"Treasures of a Lost Art: Italian Manuscript Painting of the Middle Ages and Renaissance."** Through Feb. 1. ♦ **"Dreams of Yellow Mountain: Landscapes of Survival in Seventeenth-Century China."** Through Jan. 25. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:30, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 9.)

**MUSEUM OF MODERN ART (MOMA QNS)**
33rd St. at Queens Blvd., Long Island City (212-708-9400)—**"Kiki Smith: Prints, Books & Things"** shows off a compendium of the artist's favored images: eyes, breasts, birds, babies, cats, Little Red Riding Hood, and the starry sky. Although she's primarily a sculptor, this retrospective of works on paper and fabric makes it clear that her three-dimensional thinking is deeply influenced by the etchings, artist's books, and even Xeroxes collected here. The range of works is impressive, from Smith's first experiments with silk screen in the eighties to the beautiful "Blue Feet," a series of drypoints and etchings made last year, and they reveal a side of her that's quick, funny, luscious, and fragile. Through March 8. (Open Thursdays through Mondays, 10 to 5, and Friday evenings until 7:45.)

**GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM**
Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (212-423-3500)—**"James Rosenquist"** is a pinball machine of a retrospective, gracing the museum's ramp with two-dimensional equivalents of rackety lights and bumpers. The early Pop work, which uses billboard-painting techniques to create surrealistic montages of slightly outdated magazine imagery, feels immortal. It nails a recurrent concern of modernity: the rolling blind spot of the recent past. Bigger, slicker later paintings succumb to mere razzmatazz. But Rosenquist earns blanket forgiveness on the strength of his classic "F-111" (1964-65), a multi-panelled wraparound work, eighty-six feet long, that distills the madnesses of the nineteen-sixties with supple, violent majesty. Through Jan. 25. (Open Saturdays through Wednesdays, 10 to 5:45, and Fridays, 10 to 8.)

**WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART**
Madison Ave. at 75th St. (212-570-3676)—The sparkling mid-career painting retrospective **"John Currin"** should be this season's major conversation piece. Topic: how have super-old-fashioned, alternately academic- and schlocky-looking figure paintings become the bee's knees in contemporary art? Currin's mostly imagined winsome nudes, pathetic males, society dames, gay couples, and, oh yes, women with breasts as big as the Ritz make everybody nervous in one way or another. They also display phenomenal degrees of skill and subtleties of expression. Once you start looking at Currin's stuff, it's all you can do to stop. Through Feb. 22. ♦ **"Arshile Gorky: A Retrospective of Drawings."** Through Feb. 15. ♦ **"Unrepentant Ego: The Self-Portraits of Lucas Samaras."** Through Feb. 8. (Open Wednesdays through Thursdays, and weekends, 11 to 6, and Fridays, 1 to 9.)

**MUSEO DEL BARRIO**
Fifth Ave. at 104th St. (212-831-7272)—**"Voces y Visiones: Highlights from the Permanent Collection"** contains a range of work, from the pre-Columbians, like the Taino people of the Caribbean, to contemporary Latino artists. An illustrated book by the sixteenth-century Dominican friar Bartolomé de las Casas offers an early protest against the treatment of Indians by the Spanish, the first of many works to address the ills of colonialism. Catholicism is another theme—witness the "Ex-Votos (Milagros)," tiny metal pendants shaped like arms, legs, or eyes which were pinned to saints in churches by supplicants looking for bodily cures. Art from the American barrio is represented by Pepón Osorio in "La Cama (The Bed)," a 1987 work festooned with ribbons, pennies, and candies and outfitted with rotating figurines on the bedposts, all demonstrating what he calls his "more is more" aesthetic. Through Feb. 8. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)



*"The Rose Garden," a photograph by Loretta Lux, at Milo.*

## GALLERIES–UPTOWN

*Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.*

**JOSEPH BEUYS**
This collection of Beuys's work—assembled by a doctor—offers an interesting view of an artist whose own medical catastrophe (his Luftwaffe plane was shot down in the Crimea in the Second World War, and local Tartars nursed him back to life) served as a touchstone in his work. Along with the expected fat, felt, and sleds (his signature elements) are props for performance art (copper canes and hats) and Surrealist-style sculptures, such as a kitchen knife wrapped with a bandage and called "If You Cut Yourself, Bandage the Knife Not the Finger" (1962)—a nod to Baudelaire's line "I am the wound and the knife." Through Feb. 14. (Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St. 212-744-2313.)

**WILLIAM POPE.L**
The three videos and assorted photographs here serve as a teaser for the two-venue retrospective at Artists Space and Rutgers University. Pope.L's performances traffic in a brand of violent physical comedy aimed directly at the pieties and anxieties associated with race. In one he gets himself up in a Superman outfit, then crawls on his belly along the street with a skateboard strapped to his back. In another, he tosses flour into the air so that it sifts like macabre makeup over his body. Through Feb. 8. (The Project, 37 W. 57th St. 212-688-4673.)

**TREVOR WINKFIELD / JOE BRAINARD**
The bright-hued "Gardens and Bouquets," by the British painter Trevor Winkfield, look like Juan Gris compositions lit with neon. Ancient statuary, brick chimneys, pumpkins, and fish all grow in his garden, making English horticulture seem like a radioactive compost heap. "The Garden IV" is a teetering topiary Molotov cocktail about to explode, topped with flaming carrots. The work of Brainard (1942-94) is more eclectic, from faux-kitsch paintings to collages with imagery cribbed from tattoo parlors and "Nancy" cartoons. Hero worship becomes art in "Cigarette Smoked by Willem de Kooning, May 15, 1970," which is enshrined in a paper mount and framed for posterity. Through Feb. 7. (De Nagy, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 212-262-5050.)

### *Short List*

**GEORG BASELITZ**
Michael Werner, 4 E. 77th St. 212-988-1623. Through Feb. 7.

## GALLERIES—CHELSEA

**OLAF BREUNING**
A delirious two-screen video installation, housed in a wooden stockade, advances the thirty-three-year-old Swiss artist's vision of a world infested with media-bedizened, pseudo-tribal youth. (Imagine a halftime beer commercial populated by feral Euro-trash.) In the black-and-white video, a scraggly performance artist, Brian Kerstetter, babbles and cavorts in an over-the-top suite at the Madonna Inn in California. In the color one nearby, Kerstetter is seen acting up at Machu Picchu, the Grand Canyon, a resort in the Alps, and other tourist shrines. The work's tone verges on seriously crazy, but the over-all impression is one of explosive glee. Through Feb. 7. (Metro Pictures, 519 W. 24th St. 212-206-7100.)

**MARC QUINN**
The British creator of coolly grotesque sculpture, in mediums that have included frozen blood, shows pedestalled white marble carvings that began as body casts of naked people who, by amputation or genetic mishap, have missing and/or deformed limbs. The style is neo-Hellenic: idealized realism, often carried through in stock heroic poses. Quinn conflates living disability with the fragmentary condition of, say, the Elgin Marbles. Can we extend our poetic savoring of damaged antiquity to peculiarities of the handicapped? Maybe if we really, really want to. But the arch concept registers so fast that actually contemplating the statues feels anticlimactic. Through Feb. 28. (Mary Boone, 541 W. 24th St. 212-752-2929.)

**JANE SCHIOWITZ**
These are quiet little abstractions, the best of which emit a pleasing visual hum generated by dynamic color combination. When Schiowitz sets a passage of rust orange against a section of warm gray, or a square of lemon yellow adjacent to another of bruise blue, an optical liftoff occurs. But this happens only a few times. For the most part, these demure oils are content with pointing toward an idea of tingly chromatic experience, rather than creating it as the eye confronts the canvas. Through Jan. 31. (Harris, 529 W. 20th St. 212-463-9666.)

**JOVI SCHNELL**
These drawings and paintings are full of happy robots, chemical sunsets, and machines caught in the process of transmogrifying into plants or houses—a sci-fi landscape of organic-mechanical overload which is too universal to really go out of style. Still, it's hard not to think that the imagery is meant to be ironic or nostalgic. If the whole thing were set under black light and accompanied by the appropriate drugs and music, you could groove quite heavily. Here, the bouncy psychedelia feels arid, chilled. Through Feb. 7. (Eller, 526-30 W. 25th St. 212-206-6411.)

**JENNIFER STEINKAMP**
Steinkamp would probably be the world's best digital-animation muralist even if her specialty weren't so, well, special. The Californian's architectural projections of flowing or jittery abstract patterns have been unfailingly gorgeous and august. Here she goes representational with four projected trees that appear to sprout from the floor. Their intricate branches, with leaves or without according to season, toss while turning, as if in high winds. The effect of each piece is a silent blizzard of line and color in virtual 3-D. The hectic spectacle is strangely restful—blitzing the optic nerve while courteously leaving other nerves alone. Through Feb. 14. (Lehmann-Maupin, 540 W. 26th St. 212-255-2923.)

**GILBERTO ZORIO / PETER MOORE**
Two shows that deliver solid jolts of avant-gardism from the nineteen-sixties. Sculptures by the Italian artist Gilberto Zorio include "To Purify Words," from 1969—a mouthpiece attached to a vast circular deployment of rubber hose and copper pipe that, we are assured, is filled with alcohol—and "Hate," from the same year, a room-spanning length of rope that spells out "odio." Zorio's rugged incarnation of abstract ideas, which would later decline into mannerism, is fresh here. Peter Moore photographed minimalist dance performances by Trisha Brown, Lucinda Childs, Robert Morris, et al. at Judson Memorial Church and other New York hotbeds of the hyper-cool. The tough, trenchant black-and-whites stir serious nostalgia. Through Feb. 7. (Sonnabend, 536 W. 22nd St. 212-627-1018.)

### *Short List*

**JULIE ROBERTS**
Sean Kelly, 528 W. 29th St. 212-239-1181. Through Jan. 24.

## GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

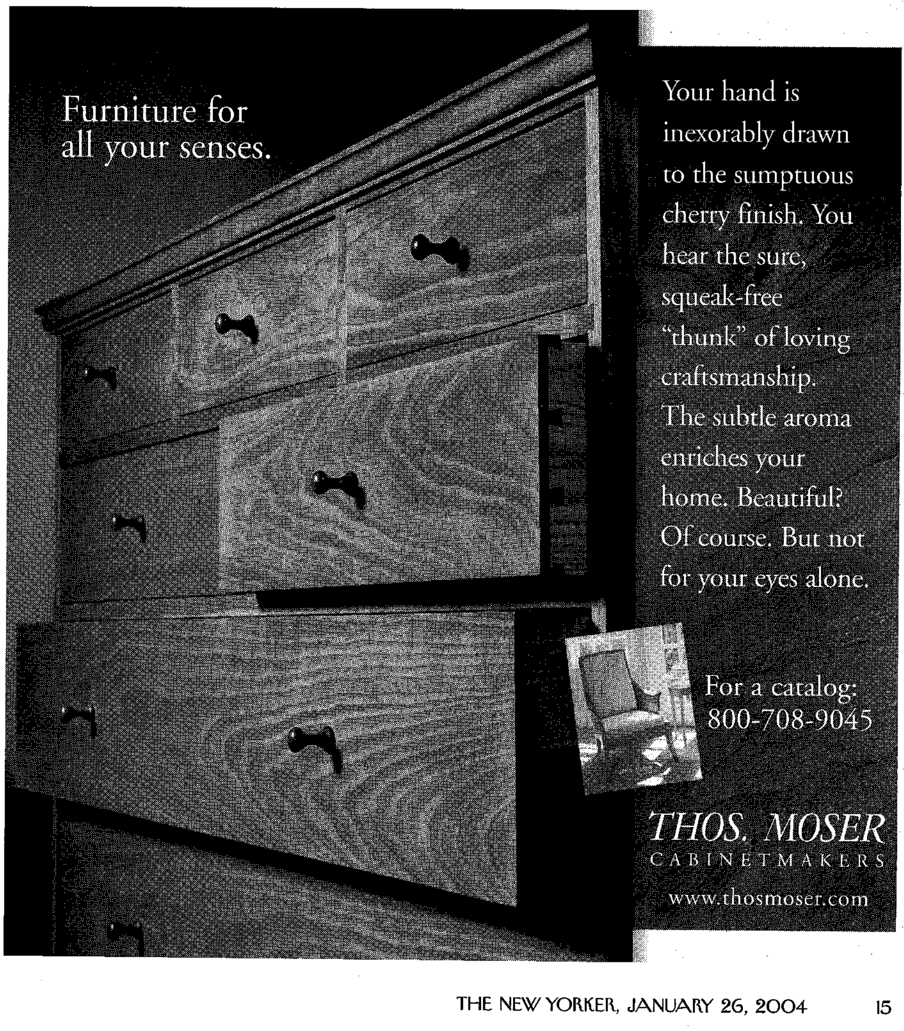
**MOMOYO TORIMITSU**
Torimitsu gained attention a few years ago with a crawling robot that lampooned the salarymen of his native Japan. That work has now spawned Mark, Gunther, and Lee, three men in suits representing the major economic powers: the U.S., Europe, and Asia. When their batteries are turned on, the anthropomorphic robots drag themselves around the gallery, which has been outfitted with bland gray carpeting, executive portraits, and office-ready potted plants. Simple line drawings of men in suits and a large video projection of the robots in a heated crawl race complete the mildly amusing critique of global capitalism. Through Feb. 7. (Deitch Projects, 76 Grand St. 212-343-7300.)

## PHOTOGRAPHY

**PHILIP KWAME APAGYA**
The first U.S. show for this Ghanaian photographer starts where other Africans, like Malick Sidibe and Sedou Keita, have trod before, but Apagya adds exuberant color to the mix. His subjects stand before painted backdrops—of offices, airport tarmacs, or living rooms decked with the latest electronics—and wave or give a thumbs-up to the camera. Apagya's photographs depict a vibrant urban place where women wash their children in private bathrooms and everyone has food in the refrigerator. Through Feb. 7. (Shainman, 513 W. 20th St. 212-645-1701.)

**DIANE ARBUS**
This show has three galleries' worth of Arbus's work, which is rare enough, but it also offers an unprecedented chance to see previously squirrelled-away contact sheets and an unpublished portfolio of photographs of an Upper East Side family, the Mattheis, taken over two days in 1969. Few of the pictures of the family are truly interesting, but the ones that do leap from the contact sheets—a couple of portraits of the oldest daughter, staring at the camera through poker-straight hair, and the younger daughter, leaning against a couch, her free hand and foot ready to slam a nearby door—rival Arbus's best. To meet expectations that might arise from the show's title, "Family Albums," and its attendant catalogue, the curators have included other portraits, including one of a kohl-eyed Jayne Mansfield and her fresh-faced daughter, another of the bookish Jane Jacobs and her bookish son, and some pretty boring shots of Ozzie and Harriet Nelson. Through March 27. (Grey, 100 Washington Sq. E. 212-998-6782.)

**EDWARD BURTYNSKY**
Extraordinary landscapes—of scenes in and around cities in China set to be destroyed by the Three Gorges Dam project—encompass more than the eye could naturally see. Using a large-format camera set at a distant remove, the peripatetic photographer makes images—previously of Canadian oil fields, Italian marble quarries, and Bangladeshi shipyards—that have the scale of Frederick Church's monumental canvases. One of the more intimate pictures shows a huge pile of rubble through the door and window frames of an abandoned building. The mountainsides leading down to the Yangtze, denuded of life and strewn with cinder blocks and bricks, look more like moonscapes than a river valley. Through Jan. 31. (Cowles, 537 W. 24th St. 212-741-8999.)


Furniture for
all your senses.

Your hand is inexorably drawn to the sumptuous cherry finish. You hear the sure, squeak-free "thunk" of loving craftsmanship. The subtle aroma enriches your home. Beautiful? Of course. But not for your eyes alone.

For a catalog:
800-708-9045

THOS. MOSER
CABINETMAKERS
www.thosmoser.com

## TABLES FOR TWO

**MR. CHOW**

324 E. 57th St. (212-751-9030)—You no longer have to be Mary Boone or Jean-Michel Basquiat to get a table in the sunken pit at Mr. Chow's, but it might help to be a former Salomon Brothers executive, the star of an eighties sitcom like "One Day at a Time," or the kind of gentleman who wears pink designer jeans and has a very tan new wife. Michael Chow opened this outpost of the Chow empire in 1979 (he considers his original, which opened in *London a decade earlier, to be the first "designer* restaurant"). It has white lacquer walls and an Imperial Beijing menu that's distinctly cult of personality: there are First Courses and Of Courses and a dish glossed as "my favorite" (pink prawns).

There are also brown prawns and white prawns and green prawns. The green—in a shade as violent as that of a Warhol shadow painting—were said to be Keith Haring's preferred meal. (His portrait of Mr. Chow, which hangs in the Mr. Chow in Beverly Hills, consists of three seasick-green images of the proprietor wiggling in a bowl of noodles. Chow has said, "Three green prawn heads in a bowl of noodle is not appetizing and somewhat ugly, but then ugliness in art and ugliness in life are two different things.") If you ask a waiter what gives the prawns their color, he's likely to mutter something about spinach and remember urgent business in the kitchen.

The noodle chef (sometimes the only Chinese person to be seen) usually makes an appearance around eight o'clock, positioning himself on the upper level and forcing out a hi-*ya!*-like cry while karate-chopping the air. Then he'll lift a slab of dough and slam it down athletically until it's turned to ribbon-thick strands. The noodles, when they're served, are elastic and covered in an oily meat sauce. They come on a little white dish (main courses are served on silver platters), and you eat them using heavy silver forks with cursive monograms. There are some outstanding dishes—the Cantonese duck, on a bed of peanuts; the squab, finely diced with vegetables and accompanied by a gummy, sweet plum sauce and a sheaf of iceberg lettuce leaves for making your own rolls—but the main attraction is archeological. Here among fragments of Pop art you can breathe the slightly stale air of another century.

One recent bitter-cold night, a herd of women wearing minks came in. One shrugged off her coat, revealing a ruched T-shirt in a leopard print. "I haven't been here since I was a kid!" she said. Like her outfit, it probably hasn't changed. (Open daily for dinner. Two courses, $55-$63.)

—*Dana Goodyear*

---

**WILLIAM EGGLESTON**

Many of the black-and-white pictures in this show, taken between 1960 and 1974 by the artist most responsible for the introduction of color images to galleries and museums, have never been exhibited before, and they provide a road map for Eggleston's later supersaturated color work. There are off-handedly intimate portraits of teen-agers in parking lots and on street corners, but the bare bedrooms, lonely country highways, and nearly empty diners speak most eloquently of Eggleston's gift for making insignificant places important. Through Feb. 21. (Cheim & Read, 547 W. 25th St. 212-242-7727.)

**JOEL STERNFELD**

There are two groups of pictures in this show: passersby caught on the street in 1976—in cars, hurrying, staring—and later landscapes, magisterial and ironic evocations of an unsettled America. The earlier pictures haven't been shown since an exhibit in 1980, and the landscapes have now been printed several times larger than before. Details that wouldn't have come to the fore in smaller prints—the curled toes of a stoned-looking kid sitting on a car hood, the legs twisted under the body of the "Exhausted Renegade Elephant"—make one look anew at these classic images. Through Feb. 7. (Luhring Augustine, 531 W. 24th St. 212-206-9100.)

**"SEVENTIES COLOR PHOTOGRAPHY"**

Taking inspiration from documentary photographers like Robert Frank and Garry Winogrand, most of the fourteen photographers represented in this show began working in color in the late sixties and early seventies. In 1976, William Eggleston's dye-transfer prints set the tone for the "New Color Photography" when they were shown at the Museum of Modern Art. Eggleston is represented here by pictures of a greenish building in shadow, a trophy case, and a cluttered kitchen pantry. Mary Ellen Mark's photographs of Miami Beach retirees, taken in 1979, are positively lurid, while Stephen Shore's large prints of highways and motels present a palette of colors that seem to have gone the way of tube socks and feathered hair. Through Jan. 31. (Kennedy *Boesky, 535 W. 22nd St. 212-741-0963.*)

### *Short List*

**LORETTA LUX**

Milo, 552 W. 24th St. 212-414-0370.
Opens Jan. 22.

## AUCTIONS AND ANTIQUES

**SOTHEBY'S**

Jan. 21 at 10:15 A.M.: Nearly a hundred and fifty drawings by Old Masters, among them a series of natural-history works in watercolor and gouache by the sixteenth-century French Huguenot artist (as well as explorer and botanist) Jacques le Moyne de Morgues. ♦ Jan. 22 at 10:15 A.M.: A sale of Old Master paintings, with the Italians supplying scenes of piety and the Dutch offering moments of diversion. The standout in the former category is an exquisitely preserved fourteenth-century altarpiece from the Paduan School depicting the Madonna and child and scenes from the life of Christ; two more worldly Dutch preoccupations—hunting and the craft of illusion—dominate a monumental trompe l'oeil of game weaponry by the seventeenth-century artist Jacobus Biltius, which previously deterred intruders at Bill Blass's apartment on Sutton Place. ♦ Jan. 22 at 2: A second session of Old Master paintings, along with a selection of sculpture. (York Ave. at 72nd St. 212-606-7000.)

**CHRISTIE'S**

Jan. 20 at 3 and Jan. 21 at 10 A.M. and 2: "Captains and Kilns," an occasional sale of Chinese and European ceramics. ♦ Jan. 22 at 10 A.M.: Old Master and nineteenth-century drawings. ♦ Jan. 23 at 10 A.M. and 2: The royal court of eighteenth-century Spain took a great interest in paintings of berries and bread, and for Luis Meléndez this was a very good thing. The artist specialized in the still-life, and while in the unofficial service of King Charles III he created detailed and richly textured paintings that influenced Goya, among others. This auction of Old Master paintings features an important, Caravaggesque portrait of fruit, bread, and a barrel by Meléndez, as well as other masterworks of the era. (20 Rockefeller Plaza, at 49th St. 212-636-2000.)

**OUTSIDER ART FAIR**

The twelfth annual offering of works in the primitive, intuitive, and *art brut* traditions, featuring thirty-two international dealers. (Puck Building, Houston St. at Lafayette St. 212-777-5218. Jan. 23-25.)

## CLASSICAL MUSIC
## OPERA

**METROPOLITAN OPERA**

**"Rigoletto,"** with Andrea Rost, Frank Lopardo, and Juan Pons; Marco Armiliato conducts. (Jan. 21 and Jan. 24 at 8.) ♦ It will probably take a new Met production to reënergize **"Werther,"** Massenet's touching if rather tired Romantic vehicle, but for those unwilling to wait there is the current revival, which has a cast headed by Roberto Alagna, the last major tenor of the stand-and-sing school (who really earns his pay only in Werther's Act III showstopper "Pourquoi me réveiller"); Vesselina Kasarova, who brings a rich and graceful mezzo-soprano to the role of Charlotte; and the soprano Lyubov Petrova, who, as Sophie, adds a dash of coloratura sparkle to the scene. Jacques Lacombe conducts. (Jan. 22 at 8. This is the final performance.) ♦ Semyon Bychkov, the long-established Russian conductor who is receiving renewed attention for a series of trenchant recordings of Mahler and Strauss, makes his début at the Met conducting a revival of August Everding's production of **"Boris Godunov,"** staged by David Kneuss; the cast features James Morris (in the title role), Irina Mishura, Sergej Larin, David Kuebler, Sergej Leiferkus, and Vladimir Matorin (a début, as Pimen). (Jan. 23 and Jan. 27 at 7:30.) ♦ The inspired conducting of Plácido Domingo, who enjoys many roles these days (tenor, arts administrator, restaurateur), makes Giancarlo del Monaco's otherwise static production of **"Madama Butterfly"** cook. The maestro's seductive brand of leadership compensates for any technical limitations, and he *shapes Puccini's clichés into rubatos that are by turns* balletic and arresting. He is aided by the honest nobility of Veronica Villarroel's Butterfly, the Italianate swagger of Marco Berti's Pinkerton (an impressive début), and Jane Bunnell's earthy Suzuki. (Jan. 24 at 1:30.) ♦ Ines Salazar's début (in the title role) is the highlight of the season première of **"Tosca,"** which also features Franco Farina and Samuel Ramey; John Fiore conducts. (Jan. 26 at 7:30.) (Metropolitan Opera House. 212-362-6000.)

## ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

**NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC**

Kurt Masur's three-week residency with his old band winds up with a maximum of star quality, as the husband-and-wife team of the pianist André Previn and the violinist Anne-Sophie Mutter (joined by the cellist Lynn Harrell) perform Beethoven's Triple Concerto. Mutter returns to offer the American première of Dutilleux's "Sur la Même Accord (Nocturne for Violin and Orchestra)"; Masur closes the program with Mendelssohn's "Scottish" Symphony. (Avery Fisher Hall. 212-875-5656. Jan. 22 at 7:30 and Jan. 23-24 at 8.)

**LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**

The music of Beethoven and Stravinsky has often benefitted from the lean, athletic, and no-nonsense approach of Colin Davis, who concludes the L.S.O.'s three-concert residency at Lincoln Center with the Symphony No. 8 in F Major and "The Firebird" (complete). (Avery Fisher Hall. 212-721-6500. Jan. 21 at 8.)

**STAATSKAPELLE BERLIN**

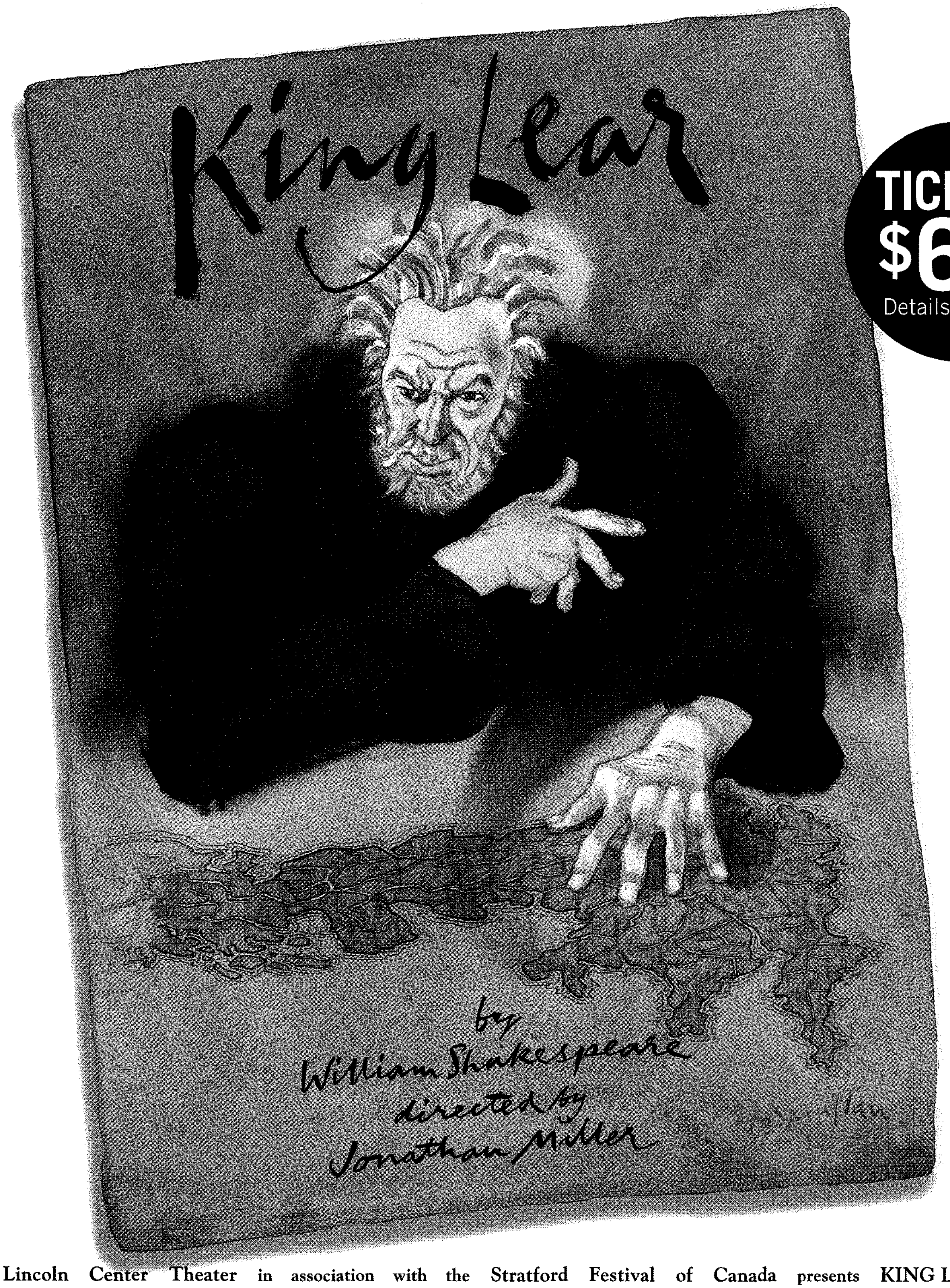
People may think what they like about the conductor Daniel Barenboim's blunt manner, but his redevelopment of this storied orchestra, worn down by years of life in Communist East Berlin, is an absolute gift: he has restored high technical standards while respecting the musicians' inveterate idealism. The music of Schumann is the exclusive repertoire of their Carnegie Hall residency. Jan. 21 at 8: Radu Lupu is the soloist in the Piano Concerto, in a concert that concludes with the Symphony No. 2 in C Major. ♦ Jan. 23 at 8: Two late works of ineffable melancholy—the "Manfred" Overture and the Cello Concerto (with Yo-Yo Ma)—precede the Symphony No. 1 in B-Flat Major, "Spring." ♦ Jan. 24 at 8: The Violin Concerto, one of the composer's strangest works (played by Gidon Kremer), along with the rarely heard original version of the Fourth Symphony. ♦ Jan. 25 at 2: The young American pianist Jonathan Biss is the soloist in two of Schumann's lesser-known concert works, the Concertstück, Op. 92, and the Introduction and Concert-Allegro, Op. 134; Barenboim concludes the series with the Symphony No. 3 in E-Flat Major, the "Rhenish." (Carnegie Hall. 212-247-7800.)

**JUILLIARD "FOCUS!" FESTIVAL: "ALL ABOUT IVES"**

What would Charles Ives—insurance executive, Wasp eccentric, and musical visionary—think of American music fifty years after his death? Would he praise the unparalleled diversity of the classical scene, or rail at the resurgence of the Neo-Romanticism he once practiced? Joel Sachs has made his annual festival of new music into the season's first celebration of

# 10 WEEKS ONLY!

## PREVIEWS BEGIN FEBRUARY 11



**TICKETS $60**
Details on back.

Lincoln Center Theater in association with the Stratford Festival of Canada presents KING LEAR
WITH (in alphabetical order) James Blendick Domini Blythe Caroline Bootle William Cain Benedict Campbell Brent Carver Geraint Wyn Davies Ian Deakin Jay Edwards David Furr Douglas Harmsen Claire Jullien Leo Leyden Matt Loney Barry MacGregor Quentin Maré Christopher McHale Paul O'Brien Guy Paul Lucy Peacock Christopher Plummer Andy Prosky Christopher Randolph Stephen Russell Brian Sgambati Eric Sheffer Stevens Baylen Thomas Brian Tree Susan Wilder SETS Ralph Funicello COSTUMES Clare Mitchell LIGHTING Robert Thomson COMPOSER Berthold Carrière SOUND Scott Anderson STAGE MANAGER Brian Scott

AmericanAirlines
The official airline of Lincoln Center Theater.

**Sponsored by The Jerome L. Greene Foundation**

This production of KING LEAR has been made possible in part by a generous gift from Marian S. Heiskell in memory of Andrew Heiskell, beloved Vice Chairman of LCT's Board of Directors 1985-2003. KING LEAR is also supported by a grant from The Laura Pels Foundation. LCT's 2003-2004 Shakespeare productions are supported by The Lila Acheson & DeWitt Wallace Endowment Fund, by a grant from The Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation and with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts.

Merrill Lynch
2004 SEASON SPONSOR
LINCOLN CENTER THEATER

## LINCOLN CENTER THEATER

at The Vivian Beaumont 150 West 65th Street Telecharge.com 212 239 6200 www.lct.org

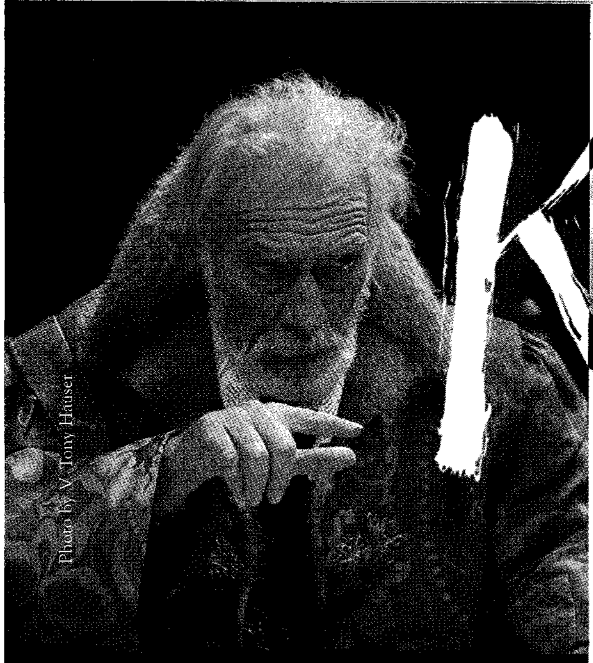


Photo by V. Tony Hauser

# King Lear

## Christopher Plummer on King Lear:

**"LEAR IS SUCH AN EXTRAORDINARILY HUMAN CHARACTER, AND IT'S SUCH A MODERN PLAY. IT'S AS IF SHAKESPEARE HAD SUDDENLY TURNED A CORNER AND RESOLVED TO TELL THE NAKED TRUTH ABOUT FAMILIES AND LOVE."**

An old and vainglorious king unwisely divides his kingdom between his two fawning older daughters and banishes his third daughter, who truly loves him but expresses her affection with modesty. Thus begins Shakespeare's heart-rending KING LEAR—a sweeping tragedy of vanity, evil and anguish.

Sir Jonathan Miller directs KING LEAR featuring Christopher Plummer in the title role. When Miller and Plummer initially worked on the play last year at the Stratford Festival of Canada, Ben Brantley wrote in *The New York Times*: "The production's greatest pleasure comes from Mr. Plummer's taking you step by step through Lear's enormous changes in temperament and insight and justifying every turn on both an intellectual and gut level. I have never seen an audience so saturated in tears at the end of KING LEAR as this one was."

---

## SEE KING LEAR FOR $60

**Call Telecharge.com 212-947-8844 and mention code KLNYMAG.**

$60 tickets available for performances February 11 through March 8 only.

Regular price $90. Bring this ad to the Beaumont Theatre box office in person or call Telecharge.com 212-947-8844 and mention code KLNYMAG or visit Broadwayoffers.com. Sat. eves excluded. Regular phone service charges apply. Limit 6 tickets per order. All seats subject to availability, all sales are final. No refunds, exchanges or retroactive discounts.

---

**LINCOLN CENTER THEATER**

at The Vivian Beaumont 150 West 65th Street www.lct.org

the composer's affecting and unruly art; he conducts the New Juilliard Ensemble in a concert of works for chamber orchestra that includes both the original version of "Three Places in New England" (Ives's supreme masterpiece) and the Third Symphony, along with a clutch of songs. A series of free Ives recitals fills out the week. (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. Jan. 23 at 8. For free tickets, which are required for the orchestral concert, call 212-769-7406. For a full schedule of concerts, see www.juilliard.edu.)

**PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA**
Simon Rattle, the director of the Berlin Philharmonic, conducts a program presenting three facets of German Romanticism—the conservative Second Symphony by Brahms, Wagner's revolutionary "Tristan" Prelude, and the New York première of the Symphony No. 10 by Henze, the brilliant child of the Second World War who's still trying to make sense of it all. (Carnegie Hall. 212-247-7800. Jan. 27 at 8.)

## RECITALS

**BARGEMUSIC**
Jan. 22-23 at 7:30: Mark Peskanov performs Brahms's Sonata for Violin and Piano No. 2 in A Major with the pianist Carmel Lowenthal; they also join the cellist Wendy Law for trios by Haydn and Shostakovich. ♦ Jan. 24 at 7:30 and Jan. 25 at 4: The Aspen Ensemble (which features the pianist Rita Sloan and the violinist David Perry) offers works by Bach, Mozart, Schiff, and Fauré (the Piano Quartet in C Minor, Op. 15). (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 718-624-2083.)

**"ACCOLADES" SERIES: DANIEL GORTLER**
The Metropolitan Museum begins its annual young-artist series with an appearance by this Israeli pianist, whose elegant musicianship places him in the tradition of Rubinstein and Arrau. He performs music by Beethoven, Schumann (the "Davidsbündlertänze"), and Brahms. (Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. 212-570-3949. Jan. 22 at 8.)

**MILLER THEATRE**
Jan. 22 at 8: The music of Toru Takemitsu—delicate, diaphanous, intense—is a perfect match for the sounds of the guitar. In Miller's latest "Composer Portrait," the guitarist Antigoni Goni collaborates with a mixed ensemble (which includes the percussionist James Baker and the Amelia Piano Trio) in a selection of works that highlight the broad range of Takemitsu's sensibilities, from the avant-garde severity of "Sacrifice" (1962) to the sophisticated easy listening of his pop arrangements (which include "Michelle" and "Summertime"). ♦ Jan. 24 at 7: In a special concert at St. Paul's Chapel, Peter Phillips, the director of the Tallis Scholars, guest-conducts George Steel's Vox Vocal Ensemble in a program of works by Crecquillon and Gombert. (Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 212-854-7799.)

**ROULETTE**
The downtown experimental-music center, moving uptown to the clubby confines of the Thalia Theatre, begins its latest round of duo concerts with an avant-jazz-meets-classical program split between the saxophonist Howie Smith (and friends) and the Matthew Shipp Trio (with the bassist William Parker and the percussionist Guillermo Brown). (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 212-219-8242. Jan. 22 at 8. For a complete schedule, see www.roulette.org.)

**ANIKA VAVIC**
The young Serbian pianist plays music by Haydn, Bach (the English Suite in G Minor), Ravel, and Prokofiev (the Sonata No. 6 in A Major). (Weill Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall. 212-247-7800. Jan. 23 at 7:30.)

**CHRISTOPHER PARKENING**
An island of classical serenity in the midst of the freewheeling New York Guitar Festival. Parkening's program, offered with the baritone Jubilant Sykes, ranges freely over the Spanish and American repertories to include works by Rodrigo and Brouwer along with three of Copland's "Old American Songs" and a selection of spirituals. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 212-415-5500. Jan. 24 at 8.)

**JUAN DIEGO FLÓREZ**
The magnificent lyric tenor offers a (mostly operatic) recital of music by Mozart, Rossini, and others. (Alice Tully Hall. 212-721-6500. Jan. 25 at 2.)

**"MUSIC BEFORE 1800" SERIES: THE CHOIR OF CORPUS CHRISTI CHURCH**
The series' excellent chamber choir-in-residence teams up with the viol group Parthenia for an afternoon of German vocal and instrumental works by Schein, Scheidt, and Praetorius. (529 W. 121st St. 212-666-9266. Jan. 25 at 4.)

**CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY OF LINCOLN CENTER: "SOUND INVESTMENT"**
After thirty-five years of commissioning new music, the Society celebrates with a four-concert series devoted to works by forty-three of its favorite contemporary composers. The second concert features works by Colgrass, Knussen, Tower, Rorem, and Rochberg; the performers include the mezzo-soprano Mary Nessinger and the guitarist Eliot Fisk. (Alice Tully Hall. 212-875-5788. Jan. 25 at 5.)

GLAUCO DELLA SCIUCCA

*The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center celebrates thirty-five years of commissions with its "Sound Investment" concert series, which continues on Jan. 25.*

**KREMERATA MUSICA**
The hopeful beginning and the bitter end of Shostakovich's career form the boundaries of this latest concert by the violinist Gidon Kremer and some talented younger friends (including the cellist Wendy Warner), which mixes the composer's rare Piano Trio No. 1, Op. 8 (not the one you always hear), and "Seven Verses by Alexander Blok," Op. 127, with works by Schnittke and Silvestrov. (Zankel Hall. 212-247-7800. Jan. 25 at 7:30.)

**MERIDIAN ARTS ENSEMBLE**
New York's edgiest brass quintet offers "Extreme New York II," a program of music by Milton Babbitt, Elliott Sharp, Jimi Hendrix, and the performers themselves. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 212-501-3330. Jan. 25 at 8.)

## ABOVE AND BEYOND

**READINGS**
Jan. 21 at 7: Joyce Carol Oates offers passages from her new novel, "Rape: A Love Story." (Lerner Hall, Columbia University, Broadway at 115th St. No tickets necessary.) ♦ Jan. 24 at 7: Ben Greenman, an editor at this magazine, launches his new book, "Superworse." The political cartoonist David Rees and the up-and-coming local rock band TV on the Radio will also be on hand. (Bowery Poetry Club, 308 Bowery. 212-614-0505.) ♦ Jan. 26 at 8: A tribute to the late playwright and novelist Thornton Wilder, with the writer Kurt Vonnegut, the poet J. D. McClatchy, the playwrights John Guare and Paula Vogel, the biographer Penelope Niven, and Wilder's nephew, Tappan Wilder. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 212-415-5500.)

**TALKS**
Jan. 22 at 7: Robert Rosenblum, a professor of modern European art at New York University, discusses the paintings of John Currin. (Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St. 877-944-8639.) ♦ Jan. 23 at 7: The classics professor David C. Young recounts the history of the Olympics. (Foundation for Hellenic Culture, 7 W. 57th St. For reservations, call 212-308-6908.) ♦ Jan. 26 at 6:30: The historian John Clarke gives an illustrated lecture on the sex lives of ancient Romans. (The Explorers Club, 46 E. 70th St. 212-628-8383.)

## MOVIES OPENING

### THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT

In a supernatural thriller directed by Eric Bress and J. Mackye Gruber, Ashton Kutcher plays a young man who manipulates time in an attempt to save his childhood sweetheart (Amy Smart). Opening Jan. 23.

### EMPATHY

A documentary about psychiatrists and what they think about as they listen to their patients. Directed by Amie Siegel. Opening Jan. 21. (Film Forum.)

### MADE-UP

A woman (Lynne Adams) films her sister (Brooke Adams) getting a makeover from her teen-age daughter, in a comedy directed by Tony Shalhoub, who also plays the love interest. Opening Jan. 23. (Angelika Film Center.)

### TOUCHING THE VOID

Reviewed below in Film Notes. Opening Jan. 23. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Sunshine Cinema.)

### WIN A DATE WITH TAD HAMILTON

A grocery-store clerk in West Virginia (Kate Bosworth) enters a contest to meet her screen idol (Josh Duhamel), in a comedy directed by Robert Luketic. Also with Topher Grace, Nathan Lane, and Gary Cole. Opening Jan. 23.

## FILM NOTES

### AILEEN: LIFE AND DEATH OF A SERIAL KILLER

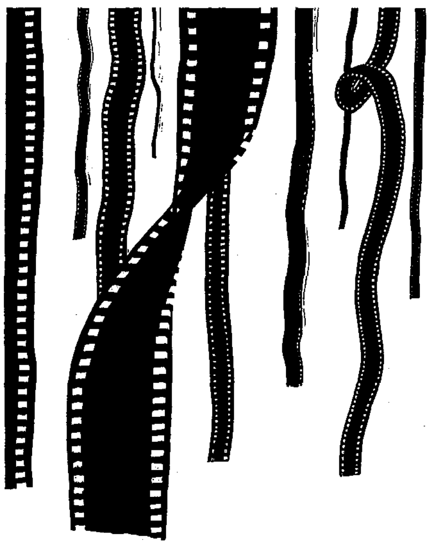
Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. (Sunshine Cinema.)

### THE BARBARIAN INVASIONS

Rémy (Rémy Girard), the plumply boisterous philanderer of Denys Arcand's 1986 film, "The Decline of the American Empire," is now in his early fifties and dying of cancer in a Quebec hospital. His investment-banker son, Sébastien (Stéphane Rousseau)—a svelte, devastatingly efficient young man who disapproves of his reprobate father—shows up from London, arranges for Rémy's comfort as best he can, and reassembles the gang of gabby intellectuals who were Rémy's friends and colleagues in the earlier movie. The hospital room becomes the site of an ongoing party: sexual memories, bawdy jokes, political tirades, and regrets bang off the walls at all hours. Eventually, the entire group relocates to a house on the same lake that was the setting for "Decline"; as Rémy grapples with his failures and satisfactions, the movie shuts up and calms down. Arcand's film might be called an idyll of death, and the concluding scenes, in which Rémy tries to pass something on to the next generation, are intensely moving. In French.—*David Denby* (Reviewed in our issue of 11/24/03.) (Empire 25 and Sunshine Cinema.)

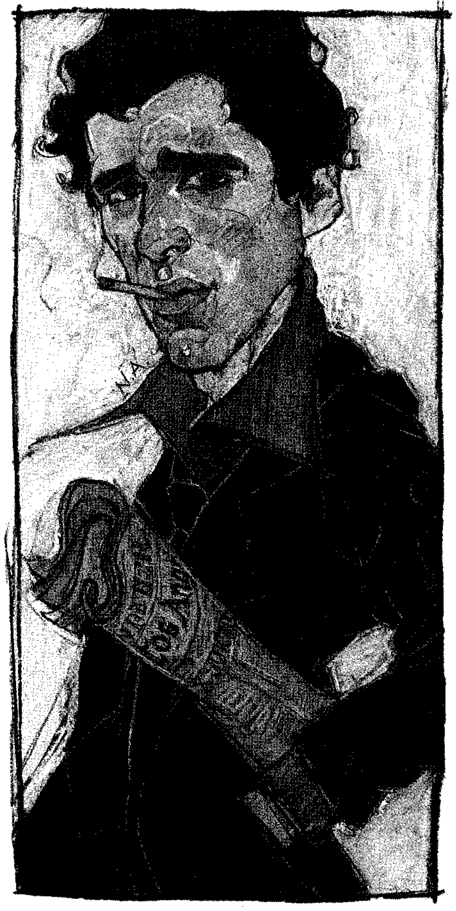
### THE BATTLE OF ALGIERS

Like "Potemkin," this film, originally released in 1965, is an epic in the form of a "created documentary"; it's a reconstruction of the events of 1954 to 1957 in the guerrilla war waged by the National Liberation Front against the French authorities, with the oppressed, angry masses as the hero. The enemy of the Algerian N.L.F.—the hyper-intelligent French colonel played by Jean Martin—isn't really a character; he represents the cool, inhuman manipulative power of imperialism versus the animal heat of the multitudes rushing toward us as they rise against their oppressors. The director, Gillo Pontecorvo, and his co-writer, Franco Solinas, are almost too clever in their use of this device of the colonel—yet it works, and brilliantly. The revolutionaries forming their pyramid of cells don't need to express revolutionary consciousness, because the French colonel is given such a full counter-revolutionary consciousness that he says it all for them. He even expresses the knowledge that history is on the side of the oppressed colonial peoples, who will win; he himself is merely part of a holding action, preserving imperialism a little longer but bound to fail. The movie has a firebrand's fervor; it carries you with it, and doesn't give you time to think. In French and Arabic.—*Pauline Kael* (Film Forum; Jan. 21-27.)



### BIG FISH

The title is apt enough; this movie is long, wet, and wriggling, and, after a while, you may want to hold your nose. It tells the story of Edward Bloom, played in his youth by Ewan McGregor and in the final act of his life by Albert Finney. That life is a picaresque, crammed with exaggeration and casual magic—a witch with a glass eye that shows forthcoming deaths, say, or a pair of spangled night-club singers who are also Siamese twins. This is easy stuff for somebody of the director Tim Burton's gifts, and you seldom feel that the new picture tests him or turns him on in the way that "Beetlejuice" or "Edward Scissorhands" did. The result is his most emotionally reactionary work to date. With Billy Crudup as Bloom's poor stooge of a son, Danny DeVito as a circus ringmaster, Matthew McGrory as a moping giant, and Jessica Lange and Alison Lohman, both badly underused, as the older and younger versions of the hero's only love.—*Anthony Lane* (12/15/03) (Battery Park 16, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Metro Twin, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.)



*At Moving Image, Elliott Gould in Robert Altman's "The Long Goodbye."*

N. ASCENCIOS

### COLD MOUNTAIN

A heroic attempt to capture, in all its tangled bitterness, the backwash of war—the lawless, scrappy life that takes shape behind the lines in an atmosphere of uneasy freedom. Inman (Jude Law), a young Confederate soldier, badly wounded and spiritually depleted, deserts his company and tries to make his way back to his home town in North Carolina and to a young woman, Ada (Nicole Kidman), he knew briefly and fell in love with. Along the way, he has a series of grotesque, terrifying adventures. Ada, meanwhile, aided by an arrogant interloper (Renée Zellweger) with a strong back, learns to run the farm that her late father left to her. The coming together of the two lovers has a satisfying kind of inevitability, like the halves of a drawbridge falling into place. Anthony Minghella adapted Charles Frazier's acclaimed 1997 novel, and directed in a style both high flown and filthy with the mire and blood of war. The extraordinary cast includes Donald Sutherland, Eileen Atkins, Brendan Gleeson, Philip Seymour Hoffman, and Giovanni Ribisi.—*D.D.* (12/22 & 29/03) (Battery Park 16, Chelsea West, Cinema 1, East 86th Street Cinemas, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 34th Street Theatre, Union Square, and Ziegfeld.)

### THE COOLER

This tough and sentimental genre film feels like a B movie from 1956 with a dirty mouth. Bernie Lootz (William H. Macy) has such terrible luck that a Vegas casino owner named Shelly (Alec Baldwin) uses him as a "cooler": no sooner does Bernie join a crap game than anyone with a hot hand immediately begins to lose. But then Bernie falls in love with a young cocktail waitress, Natalie (Maria Bello), and his magic suddenly shifts: now everyone around him wins, which is big trouble for Bernie. The writer-director Wayne Kramer keeps the color scheme of this Runyonesque fable harsh and bright—the night tones of Vegas, seen from its underside. The movie is set in sordid casinos and the kind of green-walled motel room in which fornication takes place in the adjoining room at a colossal volume. The crud and the petty desperation of "The Cooler" are immensely enjoyable as atmosphere, and the actors attack their roles with relish.—*D.D.* (1/12/04) (Angelika Film Center, Chelsea Cinemas, and Sutton 1 and 2.)

### CRIMSON GOLD

Jafar Panahi, the Iranian director who made "The White Balloon" and "The Circle," addresses a subject that has, until now, received scandalously little attention: the life of a pizza deliveryman. Hussein (Hussein Emadeddin) is as doughy a figure as his profession would suggest; he waddles through Tehran, or glides with unhurried dignity on his scooter. What he observes on his rounds could have amounted to a mere ragbag of details—a Westernized playboy with a swimming pool in his apartment, cops staking out a loud party—yet it comes across as the portrait of a city both humming with human traffic and quietly besieged by the state. The hero's own story has the luckless tinge that we associate with Turgenev or Maupassant: the pinch of frustration, plus the wrong move that lunges into calamity. In Farsi.—*A.L.* (1/19/04) (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Quad Cinema.)

### GIRL WITH A PEARL EARRING

A slow, attentive movie about a painter and his model demands the kind of patience that moviegoers may feel reluctant to supply. But Peter Webber's reworking of Tracy Chevalier's novel is worth staying with: it casts a heavy spell as it unfolds the tale of Griet (Scarlett Johansson), a maid newly arrived in the house of Johannes Vermeer (Colin Firth). The year is 1665, and the period reconstruction, for those who are aroused by such things, is—apart from a few modern lines of dialogue—formidably detailed. The danger with such beautifying efforts is that cinema will turn into a branch of taxidermy, and what keeps Webber's movie alive is the tenseness of the setup (will this girl stay in the artist's household, and, if so, will she become his lover or his muse?), and, above all, the presence of Johansson. She is often wordless and close to plain onscreen, but wait for the ardor with which she can summon a closeup and bloom under its gaze; this is her film, not Vermeer's, all the way.—*A.L.* (12/15/03) (BAM Rose Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and Sunshine Cinema.)

**HOUSE OF SAND AND FOG**

Ben Kingsley, now sixty, is in great shape. As an Iranian military officer exiled to California, he's the only entertainment in this noble pool of despair. His character, Colonel Massoud Amir Behrani, works on a road crew and as a clerk in a convenience store, but he changes into a perfectly tailored gray suit after each job and returns home in his old Mercedes. He buys a house on the coast that belonged to a messed-up young woman, Kathy (Jennifer Connelly), who lost the place due to a bureaucratic mixup during a depressive stupor. The two go at each other like figures in a classic tragedy—each has his sense of rightness and entitlement—but one can't suppress such philistine sentiments as "If the colonel weren't such a stiff and if Kathy were only a little smarter, the entire mess could have been avoided." The director, Vadim Perelman, was born in Russia and is a man in exile himself. He produces scenes of great intensity, but he doesn't capture the colloquial ease and humor of American life.—*D.D.* (1/12/04) (BAM Rose Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, and Sunshine Cinema.)

**IN AMERICA**

The tale of an Irish family that travels to New York in search of a better life, or, at any rate, a life. Johnny (Paddy Considine), his wife, Sarah (Samantha Morton), and their daughters, Christy (Sarah Bolger) and Ariel (Emma Bolger), settle near Hell's Kitchen and wrestle, as you would expect, with outlandish local customs such as air-conditioners and Halloween. Despite the title, the director, Jim Sheridan, is gripped less by the country in which his characters find themselves than by their own hope and anguish: there was a third child, a boy, who died before they came to the States. The movie has a busy intensity but lacks the rooted confidence of Sheridan's Irish work, as seen in "My Left Foot" and "In the Name of the Father." What ties it down, if anything, is the performance of Sarah Bolger—ten years old when the picture was made, but the sanest and saddest person on the block.—*A.L.* (12/1/03) (BAM Rose Cinemas, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and Union Square.)

**THE LONG GOODBYE**

In the novel, set in 1953, Raymond Chandler situated his incorruptible knight Philip Marlowe in Los Angeles, the city famed as the place where you go to sell out. And Chandler wrote to his agent that what he cared about in this book was "how any man who tried to be honest looks in the end either sentimental or plain foolish." Chandler's sentimental foolishness is the taking-off place for Robert Altman's heady, whirling sideshow of a movie, set in the early-seventies L.A. of the stoned sensibility. Marlowe (Elliott Gould) is a wryly forlorn knight, just slogging along; still driving a 1948 Lincoln Continental and trying to behave like Bogart, he's the gallant fool in a corrupt world—the innocent eye. Even the police know more about the case he's involved in than he does. Yet he's the only one who cares. The film drives you a little crazy, but Gould gives a loose and woolly, strikingly original performance. Vilmos Zsigmond is responsible for the offhand visual pyrotechnics. Originally released in 1973.—*P.K.* (Moving Image; Jan. 24.)

A room that offers you
the best kind of view.
More rooms.

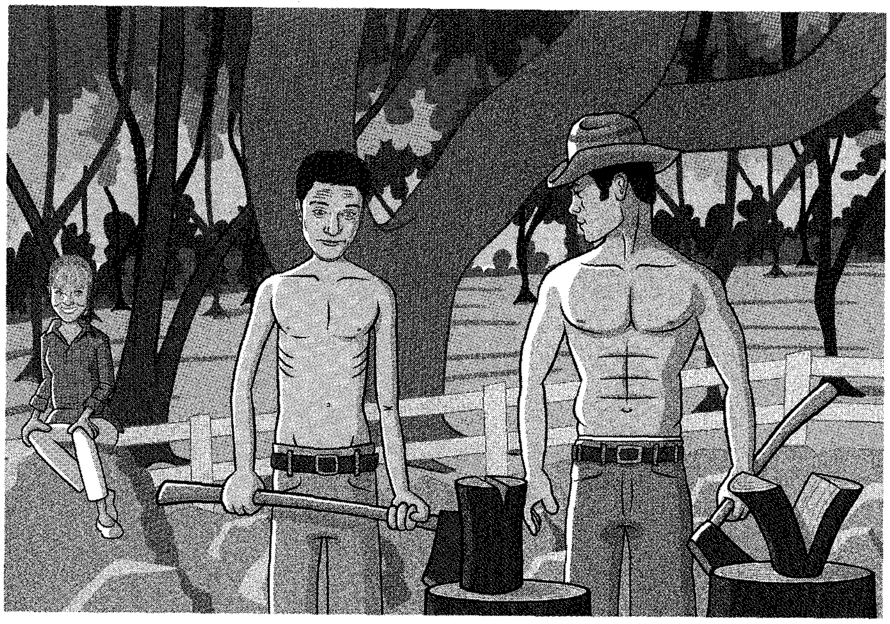
When you stay at The Waldorf Towers, every step feels as if it's found a red carpet. Down comforters battle with morning wake-up calls. And business deals are drawn with T-1 lines. Spacious suites, all uniquely detailed, allow you unparalleled luxury. All for the price of a room. As unbelievable as the suite itself.

For reservations please contact us at 1-888-WATOWER or www.thewaldorftowers.com.

The Waldorf Towers®
A CONRAD® HOTEL
100 East 50th Street, New York, NY 10022

Voted Best Business Hotel in NYC by *Travel + Leisure*'s 2003 Readers' Poll

© 2003 Hilton Hospitality, Inc.



*The comedy "Win a Date with Tad Hamilton" opens January 23.*

MICHAEL WELDON

**THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING**

The final act of Tolkien's saga. Many hours after Gandalf (Ian McKellen) showed up in the Shire and arranged for the transportation of a significant piece of personal jewelry, Frodo Baggins (Elijah Wood) staggers to the brink of Mount Doom and prepares, if he can muster the will, to cast the One Ring into the flames. By any standard, it has been an exhaustively splendid trip, crammed at once with private anxiety and lofty overviews of public strife. In this last installment, we are privileged witnesses not just to the Ringbearer's quest but also to a furious pitching of battles, as an ocean of orcs beats against the shining walls of Minas Tirith. The old gang—Legolas (Orlando Bloom), Gimli (John Rhys-Davies), and Aragorn (Viggo Mortensen)—is on hand to save the day and, by implication, the future of a civilization. The director, Peter Jackson, loyal as ever to the original book, has inherited a serious case of anticlimax; he is no more capable than Tolkien of finding a pastoral peace, at the close, that can match the energy of his war. Nevertheless, there should be enough here to dazzle the doubters; will Jackson have the nerve to remix his work, in all its majesty, and release a ten-hour marathon next year?—*A.L.* (1/5/04) (Astor Plaza, Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, Cinema 3, East 86th Street Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 34th Street, and Union Square.)

**MONA LISA SMILE**

Intelligent, responsible, superfluous. Miss Katherine Watson (Julia Roberts), a bohemian, feminist art historian from California, shows up as an instructor at Wellesley in 1953, when the college is still an upper-class breeding ground for dutiful young wives. Stirring the place up, Katherine involves herself in the lives of her students—a bitch (Kirsten Dunst), a floozy (Maggie Gyllenhaal), and a superior brain determined to marry right away (Julia Stiles)—and has an affair with a sexy but untrustworthy Italian teacher (Dominic West). The fight against traditionalism has long been won, so the movie encourages the audience to congratulate itself on what it already believes. Yet Mike Newell's direction is solid, and the period décor and costumes are a solemn riot of chintz and pleated skirts.—*D.D.* (12/22 & 29/03) (Battery Park 16, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Orpheum VII, and Union Square.)

**MONSTER**

Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. (Empire 25, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, 72nd Street East, and Village Theatre VII.)

**PICCADILLY**

While other silent directors may have scaled loftier poetic heights or sifted murkier psychological depths, when it came to lust, greed, and betrayal, the German filmmaker E. A. Dupont had no peer. This 1929 British production offers audiences a double-decker of exotica: the glitter of the Piccadilly Club, where the headliner Gilda Gray shimmies for London swells under the gaze of her lover, the club owner Jameson Thomas, and the uninhibited underclass excitement and Oriental mysteries of the Limehouse district, home to Anna May Wong. She plays Thomas's latest discovery—a scullery maid who wows the other dishwashers with some slow spiralling moves and soon becomes a dance sensation. When Wong's star goes up and Gray's goes down, violent jealousy ensues. Wong, with her lithe figure and piercing eyes, is phenomenal, uncovering streaks of canniness and freshness in a quickly corrupted woman. In the dazzling opening sequence, Cyril Ritchard (the future Captain Hook) displays just the right unctuous élan as Gray's sexually aggressive, soon-to-be-spurned dance partner; Charles Laughton is hilarious as a dissatisfied customer. And Gray herself is touching throughout as a suddenly old-fashioned seductress.—*Michael Sragow* (Gramercy Theatre; Jan. 22 and Anthology Film Archives; Jan. 23-27.)

**SIMON OF THE DESERT**

Luis Buñuel made this short satirical feature (forty-five minutes) in Mexico, just before he did "Belle de Jour." It's a jovial comedy about the temptations of St. Simeon Stylites, the fifth-century desert anchorite who spent thirty-seven years preaching to pilgrims from his perch on top of a column. Simon (Claudio Brook) performs his miracles, and the crowds evaluate them like a bunch of New York cabdrivers discussing a parade: whatever it was, it wasn't much. The Devil, in the female form of Silvia Pinal (much more amusing as the Devil here than she was in her guises in other Buñuel films), tempts Simon, and at one point frames him in front of the local priests. He falls, of course, because of the animal instincts he has tried to deny. Buñuel couldn't raise the money to finish the film, and he resorted to a bummer of a jokey ending in which the foolish saint is transported to the modern world and left, a lost soul, in a Greenwich Village discothèque full of dancing teen-agers. Up to then, this little 1965 film ranks with Buñuel's finest; his technique here is so simple and direct that the movie is an aesthetic assault on bourgeois taste. In Spanish.—*P.K.* (Gramercy Theatre; Jan. 24.)

**TORQUE**

In its own way, an experimental film: how much product placement can be crammed into eighty-one breakneck minutes? The renegade Cary Ford (Martin Henderson) is on the run from two biker gangs, the Reapers, led by Trey Wallace (Ice Cube), and the Hellions, but whenever he has a quiet moment he kicks back with a few Budweisers. His girlfriend, Shane (Monet Mazur), enjoys skidding out in front of Pepsi billboards. In the meantime, there are numerous closeups of custom bikes—the movie's real stars—being ridden by a parade of ethnic bikers. While it takes a certain type of pop imagination to conceive of a cycle so fast that a woman's skirt flies up as it zooms past, the director, Joseph Kahn, doesn't really have many ideas. The movie's tensest moment involves cinema's oldest trick: a speeding train, a helpless victim stranded on the tracks.—*Michael Agger* (Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, East 86th Street Cinemas, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.)

**TOUCHING THE VOID**

Kevin Macdonald's new film is a dismaying documentary account of what happened on the side of a mountain in 1985. Two young British climbers, Joe Simpson and Simon Yates, ascended the west face of Siula Grande, in the Peruvian Andes, and then began their descent. Simpson slipped and injured his leg, then fell again, this time off the brink of a ridge. He was hanging from the end of a rope; at the other end, sliding fast, was Yates, who cut the rope to save himself. You come out of the movie arguing hotly—as Macdonald wants you to do—about the rights and wrongs of that dire moment, and musing on the fact that Simpson survived his ordeal. The two men tell their story with a sang-froid verging on the comical, intercut with a dramatic reconstruction of the climb itself. The cinematography, all vertiginous horror and beauty, is by Mike Eley; it leaves us with a mad inkling of what drives a mountaineer, as well as a determination to stay, at all costs, on the level.—*A.L.* (1/19/04) (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Sunshine Cinema.)

**THE TRIPLETS OF BELLEVILLE**

A boy is given a bicycle. He grows up to compete, under the tutelage of his ferocious grandmother, in the Tour de France, only to be kidnapped and smuggled overseas. The old lady, with a panting hound in tow, tracks and retrieves the unfortunate cyclist, aided by three crones who feast on a casserole of murdered frogs. Such is the gritty, fantastic plot of Sylvain Chomet's animated film, which could only have emerged from a culture in which the worship of comic books approaches the status of an organized religion. Indeed, there is much to revere in Chomet's swollen caricatures and vertiginous angles, although agnostics may be tempted to point out that a little elastic surrealism goes a long way, and that to learn the exact details of somebody else's dreams—which is what this movie feels like—can be at once haunting and tiresome. In French, just about, though most of it is noise, and no subtitles are required.—*A.L.* (12/1/03) (BAM Rose Cinemas, Empire 25, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and Sunshine Cinema.)

## ALSO PLAYING

**ALONG CAME POLLY**
Battery Park 16, 84th Street Sixplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Metro Twin, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.

**THE COMPANY**
Paris and Union Square.

**THE FOG OF WAR**
Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.

**THE LAST SAMURAI** (12/8/03)
Battery Park 16, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, 34th Street Theatre, and Village East Cinemas.

**MY ARCHITECT**
Cinema Village and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.

**SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE** (12/22 & 29/03)
Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.

**TO BE AND TO HAVE** (9/29/03)
Cinema Village.
**TOKYO GODFATHERS**
Angelika Film Center and Empire 25.

## THEATRE ADDRESSES

*Unless noted, call 212-777-FILM for show times.*

**Angelika Film Center,** 18 W. Houston St.
**Astor Plaza,** 44th St. at Broadway.
**Battery Park 16,** West St. at Vesey St.
**Beekman,** Second Ave. at 66th St.
**Chelsea Cinemas,** 260 W. 23rd St.
**Chelsea West,** 333 W. 23rd St.
**Cinema Classics,** 332 E. 11th St. (212-677-6309).
**Cinemas 1, 2, and 3,** Third Ave. at 60th St.
**Cinema Village,** 22 E. 12th St. (212-924-3363).
**East 86th Street Cinemas,** Third Ave. at 86th St.
**84th Street Sixplex,** Broadway at 84th St.
**Empire 25,** on 42nd St. near Eighth Ave. (212-398-3939).
**59th Street East Cinema,** 239 E. 59th St.
**First & 62nd Cinemas,** 400 E. 62nd St.
**42nd Street E Walk,** 42nd St. near Eighth Ave.
**Kips Bay Theatre,** Second Ave. at 32nd St.
**Lincoln Plaza Cinemas,** Broadway at 63rd St. (212-757-2280).
**Lincoln Square,** Broadway at 68th St.
**Metro Twin,** Broadway at 99th St.
**New York Twin,** Second Ave. at 66th St.
**19th Street East 6,** Broadway at 19th St.
**Orpheum VII,** Third Ave. at 86th St.
**Paris,** 4 W. 58th St. (212-688-3800).
**Quad Cinema,** 34 W. 13th St.
**72nd Street East,** Third Ave. at 71st St.
**64th and 2nd,** Second Ave. at 64th St.
**62nd & Broadway,** 62 W. 62nd St.
**Sunshine Cinema,** 139-143 E. Houston St.
**Sutton 1 and 2,** Third Ave. at 57th St.
**34th Street Theatre,** 312 W. 34th St.
**Union Square,** Broadway at 13th St.
**Village East Cinemas,** Second Ave. at 12th St.
**Village Theatre VII,** Third Ave. at 11th St.
**Ziegfeld,** 141 W. 54th St.

## REVIVALS, CLASSICS, ETC.

*Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.*

**AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE**
35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—Martial-arts classics. Jan. 23 at 7:30: "Musa: The Warrior" (2001, Sun-su Kim; in Korean and Mandarin). ♦ Through Feb. 8: "Great Performances," introduced by New York film critics. Jan. 24 at 2: "Out of the Past" (1947, Jacques Tourneur). ♦ Jan. 24 at 4: "The Long Goodbye" (†). ♦ Jan. 25 at 2: "On the Waterfront" (1954, Elia Kazan). ♦ Jan. 25 at 4:30: "In a Lonely Place" (1950, Nicholas Ray). ♦ Repertory nights. Jan. 24-25 at 6:30: "Children of Paradise" (1945, Marcel Carne; in French).

**ANTHOLOGY FILM ARCHIVES**
32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (212-505-5110)—Through Jan. 25: "Variations: A John Cage Film and Video Festival." Jan. 21 at 8 and Jan. 22 at 7:30: "From Zero" (1995, Frank Scheffer). ♦ Jan. 22 at 7: "I Have Nothing to Say and I'm Saying It" (1990, Allan Miller). ♦ Jan. 22 at 9: "Changing Steps" (1989, Elliot Caplan). ♦ Jan. 23 at 7:30: "Chessfilmnoise" (1988, Cage). ♦ Jan. 23 at 9: "Sound" (1967, Dick Fontaine). ♦ Jan. 24 at 4: "Variations V" (1965/1966, Stan Vanderbeek and Gordon Mumma). ♦ Jan. 24 at 5:30: "Marcel Duchamp and John Cage" (1972, Shigeko Kubota). ♦ Jan. 24 at 7:30: "Global Groove" (1973, Nam June Paik and John Godfrey). ♦ Jan. 24 at 9:45: "Cage/Cunningham" (1991, Caplan). ♦ Jan. 25 at 1: "49 Waltzes for the Five Boroughs" (1977, Roberta Friedman et al.). ♦ Jan. 25 at 3:30: "James Joyce, Marcel Duchamp, Erik Satie: An Alphabet" (2001, Laura Kuhn). ♦ Jan. 25 at 5:30: Cage on television, including a 1960 broadcast of "I've Got a Secret." ♦ Jan. 25 at 8: "John Cage Performs James Joyce" (1985, Takahiko Iimura). ♦ A restoration première. Jan. 23 and Jan. 26-27 at 7 and 9:30 and Jan. 24-25 at 4:30, 7, and 9:30: "Piccadilly" (†).

**FILM FORUM**
W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (212-727-8110)—Jan. 21-27 at 1:20, 1:50, 3:50, 4:20, 7, 7:30, 9:30, and 9:50: "The Battle of Algiers" (†).

**FLORENCE GOULD HALL**
55 E. 59th St. (212-355-6160)—Through Jan. 27: "Filmmakers of Our Times," feature films followed by documentaries about the directors. Jan. 27 at 12:30, 4, and 7:30: "No Fear, No Die" (1990, Claire Denis; in French).

**GRAMERCY THEATRE**
127 E. 23rd St. (212-777-4900)—Jan. 22-25: "Anna May Wong: From Laundryman's Daughter to Hollywood Legend." Jan. 22 at 2: "The Toll of the Sea" (1922, Chester M. Franklin). ♦ Jan. 22 at 4: "Hollywood Party" (1937, Ray Rowland) and "Daughter of the Dragon" (1931, Lloyd Corrigan). ♦ Jan. 22 at 6: "Shanghai Express" (1932, Josef Von Sternberg). ♦ Jan. 22 at 8: "Piccadilly" (†). ♦ Jan. 23 at 6:30: "Dangerous to Know" (1938, Robert Florey) and "Daughter of Shanghai" (1938, Florey). ♦ Jan. 24 at 8:30: "Daughter of the Dragon" (1931, Corrigan) and "Daughter of Shanghai" (1938, Florey). ♦ Through Feb. 27: "The Hidden God: Film and Faith." Jan. 23 at 2: "Day of Wrath" (1943, Carl Th. Dreyer; in Danish). ♦ Jan. 23 at 4: "Utamaro and His Five Women" (1946, Kenji Mizoguchi; in Japanese). ♦ Jan. 24 at 1: "Simon of the Desert" (†). ♦ Jan. 24 at 2:30: "White" (1994, Krzysztof Kieslowski; in Polish and French). ♦ Jan. 25 at 1: "The Man Who Would Be King" (1975, John Huston). ♦ Jan. 23-26: Five films directed by Dorothy Arzner. Jan. 23 at 9: "Anybody's Woman" (1930). ♦ Jan. 24 at 5: "Sarah and Son" (1930). ♦ Jan. 24 at 7: "Craig's Wife" (1936). ♦ Jan. 25 at 7: "The Bride Wore Red" (1937). ♦ Jan. 26 at 6: "Paramount on Parade" (1930).

**GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM**
Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (212-423-3500)—Through Jan. 31: A Federico Fellini retrospective. All films are in Italian. Jan. 21 at 7: "Ginger and Fred" (1985). ♦ Jan. 23 at 7 and Jan. 24 at 3: "Fellini Satyricon" (1969). ♦ Jan. 24 at 7: "Intervista" (1988).

**SUNSHINE CINEMA**
139-143 E. Houston St. (212-358-0573)—Midnight movies. Jan. 23-24: "Blood Feast" (1963, Herschell Gordon Lewis).

**THALIA THEATRE**
Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. (212-864-5400)—Through Feb. 14: "The Hilarious History of the World." Jan. 24 at 2: "My Little Chickadee" (1940, Edward F. Cline). ♦ Jan. 24 at 3:30: "Blazing Saddles" (1974, Mel Brooks). ♦ Jan. 24 at 6: "Twentieth Century" (1934, Howard Hawks). ♦ Jan. 24 at 7:45: "Some Like It Hot" (1959, Billy Wilder). ♦ Jan. 25 at 2: "Bob Roberts" (1992, Tim Robbins). ♦ Jan. 25 at 4: "Do the Right Thing" (1989, Spike Lee). ♦ Jan. 25 at 7: "Dr. Strangelove" (1964, Stanley Kubrick). ♦ Jan. 25 at 8:45: "1941" (1979, Steven Spielberg).

**WALTER READE THEATRE**
Lincoln Center (212-875-5600)—Through Jan. 29: The 2004 New York Jewish Film Festival. Jan. 21 at 12:30 and 6:30 and Jan. 24 at 9:30: "Caravan 841" (2001, Zion Rubin; in Hebrew). ♦ Jan. 21 at 3:30: "Moments—Israel," a collection of three-minute films. ♦ Jan. 21 at 8:30: "The Commandment Keepers" (2004, Marlaine Glicksmsan). ♦ Jan. 22 at 12:30 and 6:15: "Tikkun" (2002, Taliya Finkel; in Hebrew). ♦ Jan. 22 at 3:30: "Kafka Goes to the Movies" (2002, Hanns Zischler). ♦ Jan. 22 at 8:45, Jan. 24 at 7, and Jan. 25 at 3:15: "The Birch-Tree Meadow" (2003, Marceline Loridan-Ivens; in French). ♦ Jan. 25 at 1: "A Vilna Legend" (1924/1933, Zygmund Turkow and George Roland). ♦ Jan. 25 at 6 and Jan. 27 at 12:30: "A Hungarian Passport" (2001, Sandra Kogut; in English, Hungarian, French, and Portuguese). ♦ Jan. 25 at 9 and Jan. 27 at 6: "The Barbecue People" (2002, David Ofek and Yossi Madmoni; in Hebrew). ♦ Jan. 27 at 3:30 and 9: "Alila" (2003, Amos Gitai; in Hebrew).

AIPAD The Photography Show 2004®

The World's Premier Exposition
Devoted to Fine Art Photography

FEBRUARY
12-15
2004
NEW YORK HILTON
MIDTOWN, NYC

NOW OPEN
FOUR
DAYS!

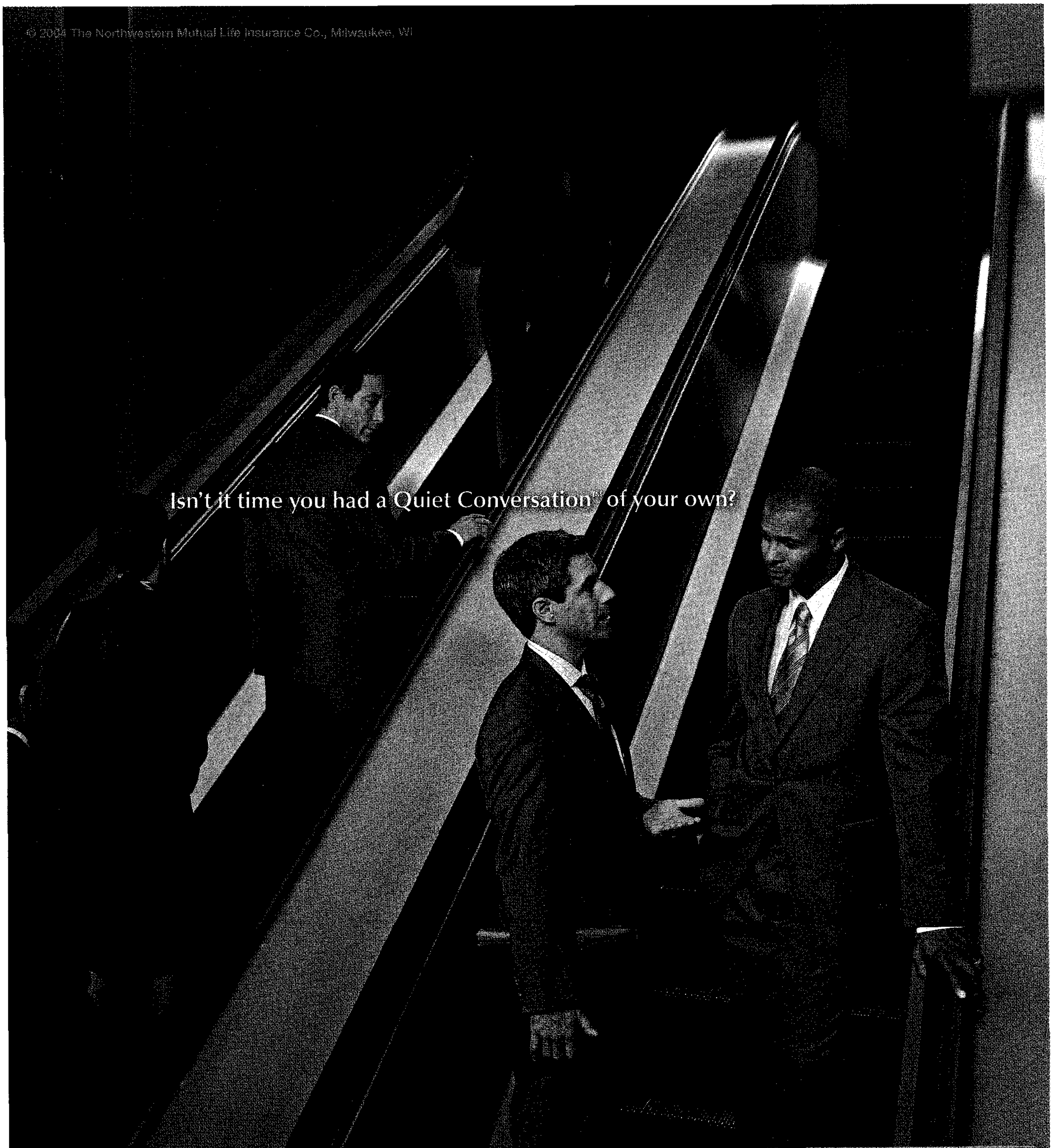
EXHIBITIONS OPEN
Thursday, February 12, Friday, February 13,
and Saturday, February 14, 12-8pm
Sunday, February 15, 11-6pm

TICKET PRICE
$20/One day pass
$30/Four day pass
(Ticket price includes AIPAD's 2004 *Annual Membership Directory and Illustrated Catalogue*)

LECTURES
*Open to the public*
*Saturday, February 14*
9:30am to 11:30am
**A Brief History of War Photography**
BALLROOM, NEW YORK HILTON HOTEL, 3RD FLOOR
**Vicki Goldberg**, *Art Critic and Author*

*Sunday, February 15*
10:00am to 11:30am
**Texas Photography and the State It's In**
BALLROOM, NEW YORK HILTON HOTEL, 3RD FLOOR
*Moderator & Panelist*
**Anne Wilkes Tucker, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston**
*Panelists*
**Roy Flukinger,** Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, The University of Texas, Austin
**John Rohrbach,** Amon Carter Museum of Western Art, Fort Worth
**Wendy Watriss,** FotoFest, Houston

THE ASSOCIATION OF INTERNATIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY ART DEALERS
www.aipad.com


Isn't it time you had a Quiet Conversation℠ of your own?

© 2004 The Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Co., Milwaukee, WI

INSURANCE | RETIREMENT PLANNING | EDUCATION FUNDING | ESTATE PLANNING

There are times in life when you could really use expert financial advice. For more than 145 years, Northwestern Mutual and its products have quietly earned a most enviable reputation. Visit www.nmfn.com for more information.

**Northwestern Mutual**
FINANCIAL NETWORK®

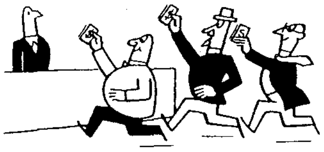
*It's time for a Quiet Conversation.*℠

The Northwestern Mutual Financial Network® is a marketing name for the sales and distribution arm of The Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company, Milwaukee, WI, and its affiliates. Securities offered through Northwestern Mutual Investment Services, LLC.

THE NEW YORKER

# THE TALK OF THE TOWN

## COMMENT
## TAXING

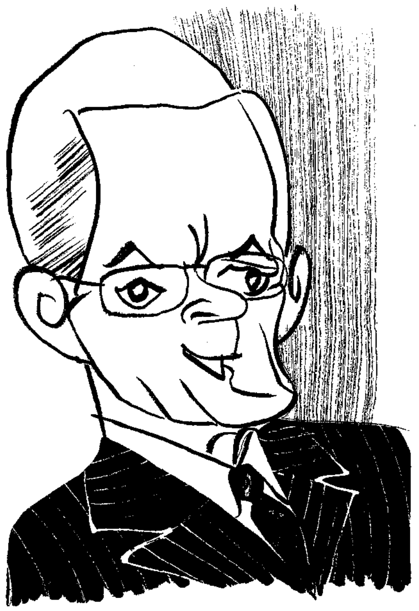


In 1981, David Stockman, Ronald Reagan's budget director, invited the financial journalist William Greider to the White House and told him that the President's controversial and far-reaching tax-cut package was a "Trojan horse" designed to reduce the top tax rates on the wealthy. Greider reported this comment in *The Atlantic Monthly*, and the flap that ensued prompted James Baker, Reagan's flinty chief of staff, to summon Stockman to his office. "My friend," Baker began, "I want you to listen up good. Your ass is in a sling." The only way for Stockman to save his job, Baker explained, was for him to have lunch with the President. "The menu is humble pie. You're going to eat every last mother f'ing spoonful of it. You're going to be the most contrite sonofabitch this world has ever seen." Just in case Stockman hadn't got the message, Baker added, "When you go through the Oval Office door, I want to see that sorry ass of yours dragging on the carpet."

ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM BACHTELL

Several years later, after Stockman left the White House, he wrote a best-selling book, "The Triumph of Politics," in which he recalled the encounter with Baker and lamented the fact that Reagan's political advisers refused to sanction cuts in spending programs to pay for the tax reductions. The book remains an essential source for understanding why the first round of supply-side economics left the federal government trillions of dollars in debt. Now it has a successor: "The Price of Loyalty," by the former *Wall Street Journal* reporter Ron Suskind, which recounts the experience of Paul O'Neill, George W. Bush's first Treasury Secretary.

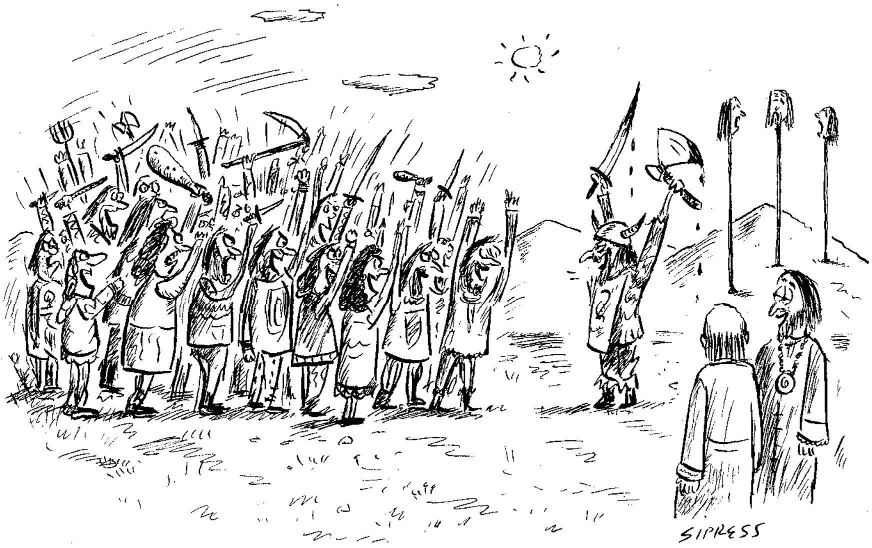
O'Neill is hardly a dispassionate observer. In December, 2002, after two uncomfortable years on the job, during which time he earned a reputation as a maverick, he got a call from his old friend Dick Cheney, who told him that he was being fired. Suskind's book is O'Neill's reply to this indignity—a third-person memoir that bristles with resentment at his treatment. But, self-serving though the book may be, it offers enough inside information to be a damning read.



*Paul O'Neill*

The media's attention has focussed mostly on O'Neill's not very revealing revelation that the Administration was plotting from week one to remove Saddam from power, but the bulk of the tale concerns domestic policy. O'Neill provides a vivid and detailed account of how, in just three years, the Bush Administration transformed a healthy budget surplus into a deficit that this year is likely to reach five hundred billion dollars. O'Neill is often described as a moderate; in fact, he is a fervent believer in the free-market approach to almost everything. His ambition, when he left the chairmanship of Alcoa for the Treasury, was to replace Social Security with a system of private-investment accounts. He supported tax cuts, too, but he thought that the Administration's $1.6-trillion giveaway should be contingent on the state of the economy. Suskind discloses that O'Neill and the Federal Reserve chairman, Alan Greenspan, tried to persuade the President to accept a set of "triggers," which would limit the scope of tax cuts if the fiscal outlook worsened, as it soon did. "I won't negotiate with myself," Bush told O'Neill when he brought up the idea. "It's that simple."

Having worked with Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, and the elder George Bush, O'Neill was astonished at this President's casual approach to governing. ("Pablo . . . whatta ya got?" he would ask when O'Neill entered the Oval Of-



*"He's energizing his base."*

• •

fice.) O'Neill quickly concluded that a small group surrounding the President made most of the key decisions. It consisted of Karl Rove, Bush's political adviser; Karen Hughes, his communications adviser; Andrew Card, the White House chief of staff; and Dick Cheney, whom O'Neill had known for almost thirty years. As Stockman's book made clear, the Reaganites, however much they may have misled the public, were true believers engaged in an ideological crusade to reinvigorate the economy. By contrast, most of the senior members of the Bush Administration come across in Suskind's book as political opportunists with no real interest in economics. They are much more concerned with delivering goodies to the President's political base of wealthy corporate executives and conservative activists, regardless of long-term consequences.

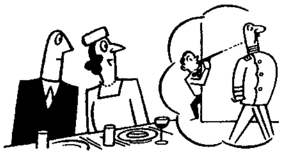
Very occasionally, Bush questioned whether he was going too far in pandering to the rich and the right wing. "Are you proposing that we accelerate all the tax cuts, or just for those in the middle?" he asked his senior officials in late 2002. "Won't the top-rate people benefit the most from eliminating the double taxation of dividends? Didn't we already give them a break at the top?" The White House's economic experts, who had been hired for their conservative views, were momentarily taken aback. "Mr. President, remember the high earners are where the entrepreneurs are," Glenn Hubbard, then the chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers, said. "It's also about the supply side," Lawrence Lindsey, who headed the National Economic Council, added.

O'Neill watched all this with anguish. Shortly before he was fired, he confronted Cheney about the Administration's latest proposal to cut taxes by another six hundred and seventy-four billion dollars over ten years, pointing out that the country was "moving toward a fiscal crisis." The Vice-President stopped him. "Reagan proved deficits don't matter," he said. "We won the midterms. This is our due." In fact, Reagan didn't prove anything of the kind. Early in his first term, Congress was forced to adopt emergency tax increases and spending cuts to restrain the ballooning budget shortfall. Despite this remedial action, it wasn't until the early nineties, when George Bush Senior and Bill Clinton raised taxes, that the nation's finances were put in proper order, opening the way to the longest economic expansion on record.

This year, absent a major shift in policy, budget deficits will exceed those incurred in the Reagan era. As a result, the country faces the prospect of higher interest rates, lower investment, a spending crunch in Congress, and, quite possibly, a financial crisis as international investors lose faith in the ability of the Treasury to finance the imminent retirement of the baby boomers. The White House, under the guise of providing a necessary short-term stimulus to the economy—the short term being a period that ends on Election Day—has stored up a lot of trouble for the future. Our breezy President, if he is reëlected, may well find himself ruing his refusal to heed O'Neill's warnings.

—*John Cassidy*

## HAUNTS
## ECTOPLASM!



There is something about an evening snowstorm and an empty hotel ballroom—the cold, stale silence punctuated by creaks and groans—that can make even a hardened skeptic turn superstitious. The mind races with images of a wild-eyed Jack Nicholson, in "The Shining," wandering around the Overlook Hotel. A door closes somewhere; faint voices recede. Maybe, if the ballroom you're standing in happens to belong to the Maritime Hotel, a Chelsea hot spot, it's just the kitchen staff at Matsuri, a Japanese restaurant in the basement, but *maybe* . . . Well, you might not stick around to find out.

Talk has been circulating lately among employees at the Maritime and its two restaurants, Matsuri and La Bottega, that the place—thriving though it is—may in fact be, like St. Mark's Church (so it is said), or like Apartment 77 at the Dakota (goes the lore), haunted. Ghost sightings, reports of inexplicable noise (distant children's voices), and sensations of general unease among the guests have become sufficiently prevalent, according to the staff grapevine, that the operators at the front desk have begun to keep a log, recording each new disturbance. At the hotel bar early last week, a waitress allowed that the list runs for "pages and pages," and that a pattern has emerged: paranormal activity "only happens on certain floors—like the second and the eighth—and in the ballroom." The waitress herself had spent a night upstairs and found the experience mildly unsettling. "I woke up and felt like I was being watched," she said.

The Maritime is a new hotel (it opened last April), with modern amenities (flat-screen TVs, Saarinen tables), but

advertisement

# RSVP

AN INVITATION TO RESPOND DIRECTLY TO THE NEW YORKER'S ADVERTISERS.

## READER SERVICE VALUE PROGRAM

### APPAREL & ACCESSORIES

1 **A TAIL WE COULD WAG.** Creating fun wear for people and pets. Wholesale and retail sales, belts and more for people, collars and more for pets. Visit us at www.tailwags.com or call toll-free, 1-866-726-WAGS (9247).

### ART & ANTIQUES

2 **PARKS GALLERY** represents a small number of exceptional contemporary painters and sculptors, including Melissa Zink whose art is inspired by "the reading experience." Visit www.parksgallery.com.

**TAI GALLERY/TEXTILE ARTS** is one of the world's finest galleries featuring the art of traditional textiles and Japanese bamboo art. For more information and show schedule, visit www.textilearts.com.

### AUTOMOTIVE

3 **TOYOTA.** In addition to developing high quality vehicles, Toyota has also contributed to some major developments in the automotive industry including Hybrid Synergy Drive® technology and fuel cell-powered vehicles. For more information on Toyota innovations and technologies that positively impact the world, visit us at toyota.com/tomorrow.

### BOOKS & PUBLICATIONS

4 **THE PIFFLES OF POPE.** Have a ball with this comedy/mystery novel lampooning the shenanigans of its blundering, obsessive anti-hero. A numinous painting triggers the action. Contact the author at johndole@taosnet.com.

5 **NANCY YAEGER.** The Waterfall—by Nancy Rogers Yaeger. A captivating modern tale unfolds against the backdrop of a beautiful Caribbean island.

6 **Please send me information on all the numbered items in this category.**

### ENTERTAINMENT

7 **CONCERTORI RECORDING.** Fulfill the dream of a lifetime as you record a CD with full orchestra. Affordable and designed for classically trained musicians and singers. Visit www.concertori.com. Concertori recording—your dream come true.....

### FURNISHINGS & ACCESSORIES

8 **FANIMATION.** Featuring an outstanding collection of 21 unique ceiling, floor, and wall-mount fans. Available in numerous finish options and over 36 blade choices. Fanimation fans complement every décor, from tropical and traditional to retro and contemporary. FREE literature. Call 1-888-567-2055 or visit www.fanimation.com.

9 **QUEL OBJET.COM.** Traditional French motifs and products updated to a modern playful and colorful elegance. Table linens and ceramic chickens, with deck chairs, espadrilles, and razzeteurs on the way. Visit QuelObjet.com.

10 **Please send me information on all the numbered items in this category.**

### HEALTH CARE

11 **DUKE DIET & FITNESS CENTER.** We offer proven, medically based strategies to help you lose weight, increase your physical fitness, and manage stress. Two, three, and four-week residential programs available. Visit our Web site at www.dukedietcenter.org or call 1-800-235-DUKE.

12 **HILTON HEAD HEALTH INSTITUTE.** Located on beautiful Hilton Head island, Hilton Head Health Institute has been the world's premier weight loss spa for over 25 years. Visit www.hhhealth.com or call 1-800-292-2440.

13 **Please send me information on all the numbered items in this category.**

### TRAVEL

14 **KIAWAH ISLAND GREAT BEACH VACATIONS.** Private, security-gated beach resort near Historic Charleston. Free 32-page color guides. Call our trip-planning concierge or surf our Web guides today! Call 1-866-361-6945 or visit www.kiawahsfinest.com.

15 **KONA VILLAGE.** Discover an unspoiled paradise resort on the Kona Coast of Hawaii's Big Island. Away from televisions, telephones, and radios. Hawaii as it was meant to be. For more information, visit www.konavillage.com or call 1-800-367-5290.

16 **MALLOW CASTLE.** Irish Castle—privacy, history, luxury. Rent your own castle in the southwest of Ireland. Fully staffed, only available a few weeks each year. Contact owners at 1-202-547-7849 or e-mail mallowcastle@eircom.net.

17 **PETER DEILMANN CRUISES.** Enchanting 7 to 11-night luxury cruises on Europe's most majestic rivers. Magnificent scenery. Pre-post cruise stays. All-inclusive tours also available. For a free brochure, call 1-800-277-1436. Visit our Web site at www.deimann-cruises.com.

18 **PRINCE HOTELS JAPAN.** Experience the best of traditional Japanese hospitality with luxurious accommodations, authentic cuisine, and impeccable service. Choose from over 70 locations. Visit www.PrinceJapan or call 1-800-542-8686.

19 **EXPERIENCE WYOMING.** Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks, Devils Tower, wildlife, and more. Find your dream vacation in Wyoming. Free vacation packet. Call 1-800-225-5996 or visit www.wyomingtourism.org.

20 **Please send me information on all the numbered items in this category.**

© 2004 The Condé Nast Publications, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

IF UNABLE TO REACH TELEPHONE LISTINGS, SEND REQUESTS, WITH ISSUE DATE NOTED, TO THE NEW YORKER READER SERVICES, 4 TIMES SQUARE, NEW YORK, NY 10036. IF RESPONSE CARD IS MISSING, SEND YOUR REQUESTS WITH ISSUE DATE NOTED, TO THE NEW YORKER, P.O. BOX 5347, PITTSFIELD, MA 01203-9892. OFFER VALID UNTIL MAY 10, 2004.

For more information, visit www.newyorker.com and click on The New Yorker Reader Link.

040126

THE NEW YORKER COMPASS

www.newyorkercompass.com

*Join The New Yorker Compass,* an exclusive online forum and have the opportunity to weigh in on a variety of interesting topics via Web-based surveys throughout the year. Members will be awarded a choice of New Yorker–themed computer "wallpaper."

**POINT THE WAY. JOIN TODAY.**

● ● ●

the building dates back to the nineteen-sixties, when it was designed as the headquarters for the National Maritime Union. (This explains the porthole windows that face Ninth Avenue, giving the place the appearance of a Connect Four game board.) In the eighties, it was taken over by Covenant House, the scandal-beset shelter for troubled teens, and, briefly, in the late nineties, it belonged to the Chinese government. It's the Covenant House tenancy that is typically cited, however vaguely, as the source of the haunting; one supposes that it accounts for the recurring theme of ghostly children's voices.

Last Wednesday, a would-be ghostbuster booked a room on the second floor and checked in just as the snow was beginning to stick. He had armed himself with a tape recorder, a Polaroid camera (flash turned off), and an open mind—three investigative tools deemed indispensable by Dr. Hans Holzer, at-large professor of parapsychology. (Holzer, who is eighty-three, has published a hundred and thirty-eight books, including "Ghosts I've Met.") "Don't take any equipment with you like Geiger counters and quartz crystals," Holzer had advised. "It's all bullshit."

In the elevator on the way to the room, Holzer's new apprentice asked the bellhop about ghost sightings. "You hear things, crazy things," the bellhop replied. "I don't know if it's really sightings as much as people hearing stuff. This building has kind of a crazy history." The bellhop then provided brief instructions for ordering room service. "But don't answer the door unless they say, 'Room service,' " he added. "Because it could be a ghost."

After dinner ("Ghosts?" the room-service attendant had said. "We don't believe in that here"), the guest ventured out. Each floor seemed equally ominous: dark-blue walls and ceiling, a long, narrow hallway with a porthole at either end. He snapped some random photos in the dark, as he'd been advised to do, and recorded peripheral sounds—pipes clanking, furnaces rumbling, but, alas, no spooky children's voices.

The witching hour passed. On the second floor, an employee from La Bottega was looking for one of her colleagues. "Oh, you heard about the logbook?" she said. "This is one of the floors, isn't it?" She became visibly uncomfortable. "Today, we had to move two people from this floor. They kept hearing children talking. If you don't mind, I'd like to get off this floor now."

Down to the ballroom, then. There was a Ping-Pong table in the middle, with chairs alongside, as if for spectators. On a balcony, there was an unfinished bar, with a lone bottle of Grey Goose vodka. The apprentice retreated to his room, where one of the bedside lights had begun to flicker, and slept, it should be said, very well. Despite repeated inquiries, no one could, or would, produce the log for inspection. In fact, a hotel spokesman professed disbelief at its existence: "I don't know whether or not somebody is keeping their own, like a personal thing, but there definitely isn't one behind the front desk."

Dr. Holzer, who walks with a cane, was unable to visit the site, but he graciously offered to examine the amateur Polaroids the following day, in his apartment on Riverside Drive. "Look here, the reflection is not straight," he said, pointing at one image. His black cat, Isis, looked on. Dr. Holzer said that a well-trained trance medium would be required to settle the matter. "At the very least, you have a psychic energy there—what we used to call ectoplasm," he said. "It's not a figure yet, but there's definitely something. You have the beginning of a manifestation."

*—Ben McGrath*

## HEY PAL DEPT.
## OLD HACK

Robert Miller, who is the president of Hyperion Books, had to get to a meeting, so he waved at a cab on Columbus Avenue. "The cab stopped," Miller said later. "It really just stopped for a red light, but I thought maybe it had stopped for me. I don't know why I thought that, because if you looked at it you realized it was not a current cab." Indeed, the cab was a Checker, a transportation species that became officially extinct in New York in 1999, when its last medallion-bearing representative went out of service.

The one that stopped for Miller belonged to Bobby Lowich, who retired from cab driving in 1997, primarily so that he could spend his time doing the thing he loves most, which is driving a cab. Lowich explained to Miller that he and his car were no longer in business but that they didn't have anything pressing to do, so, "sure, what the hell, get in, I'll take you." On their way downtown, Lowich did most of the talking—another continuity between his pre- and post-retirement existences. He told Miller that the city's first gasoline-powered taxis were introduced in 1907, and that fifty of them lined up that year at the grand opening of the Plaza Hotel, where, as a promotion, they gave free rides to celebrities. He said that the idea of distinguishing taxis from regular cars by painting the taxis yellow was popularized by a Chicago car dealer named John D. Hertz, who founded the Yellow Cab Company, in 1915. Hertz franchised his idea, and he used the same color scheme for the logo of a car-rental company he founded in 1924. Lowich said a lot of other things, too. By the time Miller got to his meeting, the experience had become "very 'Brigadoon'-like," he recalled.

Lowich, who is sixty-seven years old and looks a little like Ed Asner, drives about a hundred miles a day, mostly in Manhattan. He doesn't pick up fares, but he sometimes gives rides to friends. His car is easy to spot, not only because it's one of the last functioning Checkers anywhere (the Checker Cab Manufacturing Company stopped producing them in 1983) but also because it's painted green and cream—which are popular taxi colors in, of all places, John D. Hertz's home town, where Lowich's cab originated.

"Taxis used to come with a door missing in front, on the side opposite the driver, and just half a front seat," Lowich said on a recent afternoon, as he headed down West End Avenue. "There was no heat in the driver's part, and not much in the back, although the cab companies supplied passengers with blankets." Lowich shares the taxi-driver's traditional contempt for traffic lights, but he drives slowly—perhaps because at ordinary taxi velocity the city would whiz past too quickly to accommodate his narration. "One time, I rode a guy who asked me if I knew where he could find some girls," he said. "I'm no prude, but I dropped him off in front of the A.S.P.C.A. and said, 'Go in there and ask for Kitty.' "

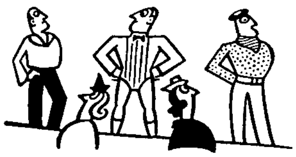
It almost goes without saying that Lowich is writing a book. However, the book is not about his own experiences, primarily, but about those of Morris Markin, an epically industrious Russian Jew, who founded the Checker Cab Manufacturing Company, in Kalamazoo, in 1922; bought the Yellow Cab Company from Hertz and his partners in 1929; and owned one of the biggest taxi fleets in New York. “Markin is my hero,” Lowich said. “Let’s go with his pluses first, O.K.? He was the first taxicab operator to hire blacks to drive cabs. This took place in Chicago in 1924. He was the first taxicab builder who extended to the black community an opportunity to buy cabs on carte-blanche credit. He was the first taxi-fleet operator to give his drivers vacation pay.” Lowich slowed down for a red light, and his aging Checker, after making the most of a large pothole, shuddered to a halt. “Now for the negatives,” he said. “Markin’s banker bribed Mayor Jimmy Walker to take the cab industry out of the hands of the city and turn it into a public utility. It would have been a great concept, and if you have a few minutes I’ll tell you why. . . .”

In the movie version of Lowich’s life—“The Bobby Lowich Story,” say—a chance encounter with the president of Hyperion would lead to a book contract and, a few scenes later, the *Times* best-seller list. In real life, that hasn’t happened, but who knows? “If and when my book is published,” Lowich said, “I think everybody in the world will love it. I don’t want to sound like a hubristic son of a bitch, but there isn’t a thing about cabs that I don’t know.”

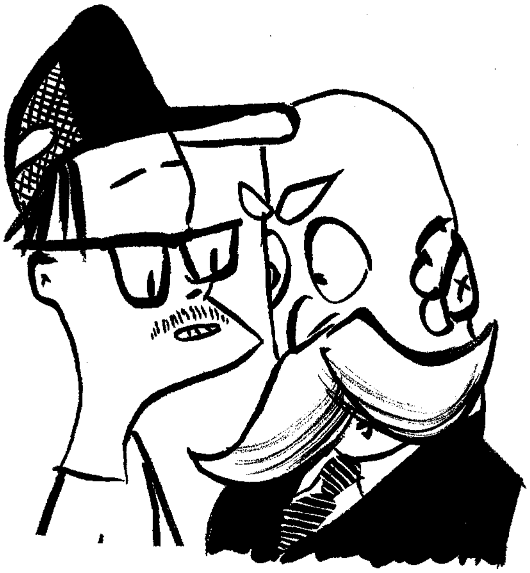
—*David Owen*

---

## THE CHARITY CIRCUIT
## BARELY SHAVERS



It is probably a good sign for the mustache in America that the biennial World Beard and Moustache Championships, after being held in the Northern European towns of Höfen/Enz, Pforzheim, Trondheim, and Schömberg, came this past November to Carson City, Nevada. Since the early seventies, the mustache, despite some memorable specimens (Rollie Fingers, Tom Selleck, Ned Flanders) and die-hard constituencies (cops, professional bowlers, *Playgirl* pinups), has failed to match the mainstream popularity of its questionable cousin the goatee. It’s hard, certainly, to imagine an American President sporting a soup-strainer like Václav Havel’s.



Still, there have been glimmers of a mustache revival. When a model named Eugene Hutz appeared in a fashion show, in the summer of 1999, wearing the drooping accordion player’s mustache of his native Ukraine, he inspired a flurry of mustache coverage. “It’s not every day you see Snidely Whiplash on a runway,” the *Times* observed.

Which brings us to a windblown stretch of Williamsburg the other night, where the Pirate, an earnest young man with an earnest young mustache, was standing in front of a shuttered bar—the official site of the finals of the Mustaches for Kids mustache-growing contest. “The bar had its liquor license confiscated today, and no one told us,” the Pirate, one of the contest’s organizers, explained bitterly, shivering in his Hawaiian shirt, jeans, and running shoes. He pointed off into the darkness, in the direction of the Alligator Lounge, where the contest had established provisional quarters.

Mustaches for Kids got its start in Los Angeles in 1999, when two guys named Big Al and Dan Strange decided to bet on who could grow the best mustache in a month. Soon, their wager grew into an organized competition for charity. Contestants line up sponsors, who pledge money to the Make-A-Wish Foundation, the idea being that it is as hard to cultivate a mustache for four weeks as it is to run a marathon, or perhaps a 10K.

Although the official Mustaches for Kids Web site lists a few basic rules (No. 3: “No Hitler mustaches”), the general laxity would probably dismay the judges at the World Beard and Moustache Championships, where there is a range of mustache categories (Wild West, Imperial, Dali), with exacting regulations for each. But the crowd at the Alligator Lounge—girlfriends, clean-shaven hangers-on, perplexed regulars—did not seem to mind that the twenty or so mustaches assembled for the contest were mostly paltry and undistinguished.

The contestants huddled in little pockets around the bar, drinking pints of Pabst Blue Ribbon and exchanging war stories (“My boss has a mustache and he didn’t get what was very funny about growing a mustache for charity”), describing ultimatums from girlfriends (“She said it had to go before the meet-the-parents ski weekend in New Jersey”), and agreeing that “ ‘moustache’ is a pussy spelling” and that “Nietzsche’s mustache was hot.” Soon, everyone gathered in the back-room tiki lounge, where the contestants stood up before the judges and introduced themselves. A man sporting a bell-bottomed navy suit and a comparatively luxuriant mustache invoked his heritage: “When my grandfather came from Russia to Ellis Island, at customs they made him shave his mustache off.” He stroked his whiskers melodramatically. “Now I, his grandson, have grown it back.” In the end, he was the winner.

Reached on the phone last week, Bruce Roe, of Bremerton, Washington, who has won trophies in the last three World Beard and Moustache Championships, was a little skeptical of the Williamsburg crew. “A month isn’t enough to get much going at all,” Roe said. He has been growing his mustache for thirty-three years. He competes in the Wild West division, dressed as Wyatt Earp. In answer to the question “If your mustache was an animal, what would it be?”—it had been put to the contestants in Williamsburg—he said, “Tiger.” He paused a moment, then added, “Sounds like they’re not too serious about their facial hair.”

—*Field Maloney*

# THE FINANCIAL PAGE
## BIG SPACE

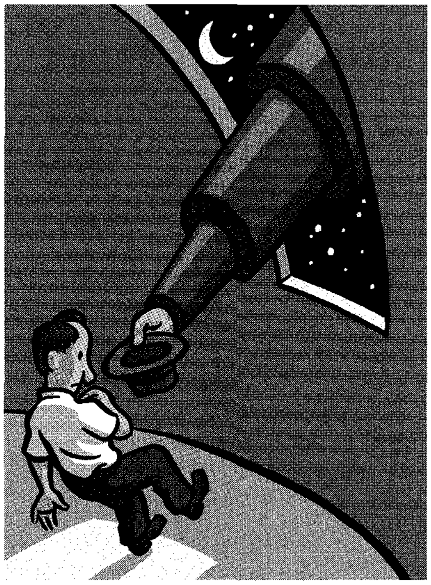
Last week, when President Bush unveiled his plan to establish a moon base and send a manned expedition to Mars, his stated reasons were, for the most part, high-flown. The plan, he argued, would revolutionize our understanding of the universe, allow us to go to worlds far beyond our own, and "lift our national spirit." But, in deference to reality, the President spent a few moments discussing the economic benefits, citing the usual list of innovations that we owe to NASA and promising that his plan would lead to a new generation of "technological breakthroughs." Our investment in space, he said, would be "repaid many times over."

The economic case for space exploration has always been important, because of the vast costs and the indeterminate benefits. And so for forty years we've heard about the ways in which the space program has helped invigorate the economy and solidify America's technological dominance. Really, though, there is no economic case for space exploration. If the goal is to increase employment or spur technological innovation, then the dollars invested in NASA would be better spent elsewhere, no matter how thrilling and magnificent the recent Mars landing and the rest of our achievements in space may be.

In the fifties and sixties, military and space research did help make the United States a technological powerhouse, in large part because of the demand that was created for products (like semiconductors) that would otherwise have taken longer to develop. But this effect—which economists call "technological acceleration"—was already diminishing when the Apollo program got under way. By the mid-sixties, civilian demand was driving the development of high-technology products.

What about those legendary spinoffs and spillovers? Many of the innovations we credit to the space program—such as Teflon and Velcro—were actually invented outside it. Others originated in space research, but the return the government got on its R. & D. investment was fairly slim. To invent something like the CAT scanner, to use one of Bush's examples of NASA innovations, it would be a lot cheaper and wiser simply to invest in medical research, rather than in moon shots. NASA claims, for example, that the lunar expeditions gave us the cordless drill; what a lot of trouble to go through to improve upon the handyman special.

A major increase in space spending may actually have the unfortunate effect of crowding out more terrestrially oriented research and development. The supply of American scientists and engineers is (in the short term, at least) relatively fixed, so, if NASA starts spending billions more, scientists and engineers will merely be lured away from other jobs, mostly in private companies. As Austan Goolsbee, an economist at the University of Chicago, showed in a study a few years ago, new spending doesn't boost "inventive activity" as much as people think. Instead, it results in "windfall gains"—basically, engineers get big raises. And since the private sector tends to be more productive than the government, it's unlikely that shifting engineers from private enterprise to the Starship Enterprise is really going to help the economy—unless by "the economy" you mean Boeing and Lockheed Martin.



When John F. Kennedy announced his moon program, in 1961, the budget deficit was three billion dollars, or about three per cent of the total budget. The government was not responsible for Medicare or Medicaid, and spending on Social Security was small. This year, the budget deficit is nearly half a trillion dollars, or about seventeen per cent of the budget—when you exclude Social Security, thirty-six per cent. Even if you accept the feasibility and the scientific value of a manned expedition to Mars, you have to wonder where we're going to get the money.

The Administration is clearly taken with the idea that a Mars mission will rally Americans around a common cause. As Commerce Secretary Donald Evans said the other day, "America has always needed a challenge of a big and bold idea." It would seem, however, that we face a few challenges already. Chief among them, of course, is the war on terrorism. Bush has told us that it's a struggle for our civilization and that it may well last a long time. We've already spent almost two hundred billion dollars on it and will likely spend hundreds of billions more. The Apollo program was expensive, but at least it was an integral, if outlandish, part of the Cold War. It is not yet clear how the Mars mission will help us vanquish Al Qaeda. Then, there's that little matter of rebuilding Iraq. At a time when we're struggling to provide Basra with fresh water, should we really be devoting our resources to irrigating Mars?

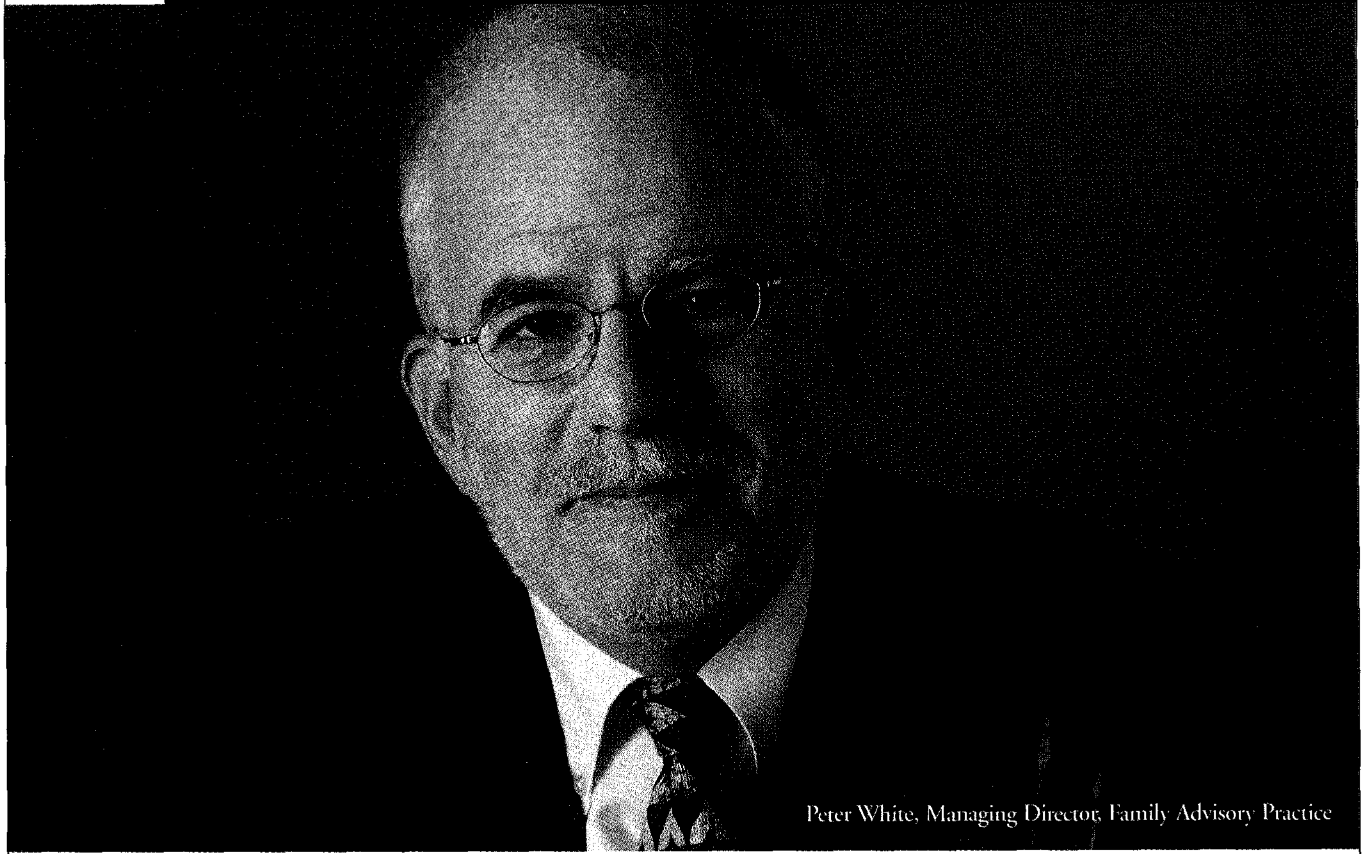
Bush's plan sidesteps the budget question by proposing that all the spending be backloaded. In the first few years, the spending increases will be small, but at some point a moon base and a Mars shot will cost hundreds of billions of dollars, and someone will have to pay. The President gets the credit for the big, bold idea, and his successors get the bill. By now, Bush's affection for big-government programs is well established, as is his "no-tax and spend" approach to courting voters. But the support of traditional conservatives for the Mars scheme is mystifying. Apparently, lavish government spending is acceptable as long as it's directed thirty-five million miles from Earth. Or maybe the Republicans have just been drinking their own Tang.

—*James Surowiecki*

CHRISTOPH NIEMANN

Q&A
*1.0*

# Raising children of affluence.



Peter White, Managing Director, Family Advisory Practice

**Q: Is being born into wealth a burden?**
*A: It doesn't have to be. But it does come with its own set of complexities. Parents grapple with issues beyond the technical. What is the effect of inheritance? How do you instill a sense of responsibility in children who may never have to work? Even allowances can become an issue.*

**Q: What is Family Advisory Practice?**
*A: We're a division of The Citigroup Private Bank devoted to helping clients think through the human implications of their wealth.*

**Q: Can you elaborate?**
*A: It's not just about increasing or preserving assets. Parents want their wealth to bring about the best possible experience for those they care about most—their children. Family philanthropy is the next-most-common issue for us.*

**Q: This doesn't sound like a banker talking.**
*A: I'll take that as a compliment.*

**Q: One would expect to hear about financial products for affluent families.**
*A: Obviously, we make our living providing comprehensive financial solutions for people. But we can do that much better when we have a clear understanding of our clients and their values. So it isn't all that far afield when you think about it.*

citigroup
private bank

---

"The Citigroup Private Bank" is a business of Citigroup Inc., which provides its clients access to a broad array of products and services available through bank and non-bank affiliates. Not all products and services are provided by all affiliates or are available at all locations. For more information, contact a private banker or relationship manager. ©2003 Citicorp. All rights reserved.

**Investment Products: Not FDIC Insured • No Bank Guarantee • May Lose Value**

ANNALS OF MEDICINE

# THE GRIEF INDUSTRY

*How much does crisis counselling help—or hurt?*

BY JEROME GROOPMAN

Soon after the collapse of the World Trade Center, experts predicted that one out of five New Yorkers—some one and a half million people—would be traumatized by the tragedy and require psychological care. Within weeks, several thousand grief and crisis counsellors arrived in the city. Some were dispatched by charitable and religious organizations; many others worked for private companies that provide services to businesses following catastrophes.

In the United States, grief and crisis counsellors generally use a method called critical-incident stress debriefing, which was created, in 1974, by Jeffrey T. Mitchell, a Maryland paramedic who was studying for a master's degree in psychology. Mitchell had seen a gruesome accident while on the job: a young bride, still in her wedding dress, had been impaled when the car that her drunk husband was driving rear-ended a pickup truck loaded with pipes. He was unable to shake the memory. Six months later, he confided his troubles to a friend—a firefighter who had witnessed similar horrors. The friend asked him to describe exactly what he had seen. Mitchell felt greatly relieved by this conversation, and became convinced that he had stumbled across an invaluable therapeutic approach. Indeed, he came to think that if a "debriefing" conversation was held soon after an upsetting event it could help prevent the onset of post-traumatic stress disorder.

In 1983, Mitchell received a Ph.D. in human development, and he began crafting a structured seven-step debriefing regimen that could be applied to groups of paramedics, firefighters, and other professionals who regularly witnessed traumatic events. Six years later, he started a nonprofit organization, the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation, to teach debriefing and related methods. The foundation has grown steadily, and more than thirty thousand counsellors are trained by it each year.

In a typical debriefing session, crisis counsellors introduce themselves and provide basic information about common stress reactions—sleeplessness, headache, irritability—as well as more debilitating symptoms, like flashbacks and delusions. Each participant is then asked to identify himself, pinpoint where he was during the tragic event (or "critical incident"), and describe what he witnessed. This is known as the "fact phase." The discussion next turns in a more emotional direction, as each participant is asked to divulge what he was thinking during the event. The purpose of sharing such memories is, in part, to draw out group members who "bottle up" their emotions. At the end of this process, the conversation enters the "feeling phase," focussing on each participant's current reaction to the catastrophe. (The counsellors ask questions like "What was the worst part of the incident for you personally?") Finally, the counsellors discuss strategies for coping with stress and suggest services that can provide additional help; by the end of the session, participants are considered ready for "reëntry" into the world. The group does not meet for a follow-up session.

I recently spoke with a man who worked at a travel agency on Liberty Street, across from where the Twin Towers once stood. He had been in the subway when the towers collapsed, but after considerable difficulty he made it home safely. "I was called by the company the next day and told to report to headquarters on Thursday," he told me. His parent corporation, which was situated in midtown, and had numerous offices throughout the city, had hired an organization called National Employee Assistance Providers to give debriefing sessions. Many of its counsellors used texts created by Mitchell's foundation during their training.

Most debriefings occur between twelve and seventy-two hours after a catastrophe, according to "Blindsided: A Manager's Guide to Catastrophic Incidents in

Yale in summer.
Same veritas.
More lux.

- Over 120 Yale courses for full college credit
- For college students and current high school juniors and seniors
- Two five-week intensive sessions
- Study abroad, creative writing, drama, filmmaking
- English Language Institute
- Supervised residential college living

See website for information and application requirements.

www.yale.edu/summerprograms
203 432-2430
e-mail:
summer.programs@yale.edu

LUX ET VERITAS
YALE
SUMMER PROGRAMS 2004

Northfield Mount Hermon School
FOUNDED IN 1879
*Teaching young people how to do well and do good in the world.*
NMH
206 Main Street, Northfield, MA 01360 (413) 498-3227
admission@nmhschool.org • www.nmhschool.org

Beaujolais Nouveau
The charm of shameless youth
TRAVEL·CULTURE·FOOD·WINE
www.francetoday.com
FRANCE TODAY

LONDON FLATS
PARIS PROPERTIES - COTSWOLD COTTAGES
Short Term - Privately owned
THE LONDON CONNECTION
TOLL FREE PHONE: 888-393-9120
FAX: 801-393-3024
WWW.LONDONCONNECTION.COM
E-MAIL: SALES@LCPM.NET
LONDON CONNECTION

the Workplace," by Bruce T. Blythe, the C.E.O. of Crisis Management International, a company that offers psychological services. Blythe writes, "Earlier than that, people are likely too numbed to put their personal reactions into words; after seventy-two hours, people typically begin to 'seal over' emotionally." This "sealing over" is seen as dangerously "laying the ground" for P.T.S.D. In most circumstances, employees are required to attend a debriefing session. Blythe writes, "Experience has shown that if attendance is voluntary, those most in need of support will not come, out of fear or discomfort."

The travel agent sat in a conference room with co-workers from the Liberty Street branch who had witnessed the collapse of the World Trade Center and had been evacuated from the building. Also attending the session were employees from uptown offices who had not witnessed the collapse or been at risk. In all, there were between twenty and thirty participants at this debriefing session. "There were two counsellors, a man and a woman, and they encouraged us to tell our stories and vent our feelings," the travel agent told me.

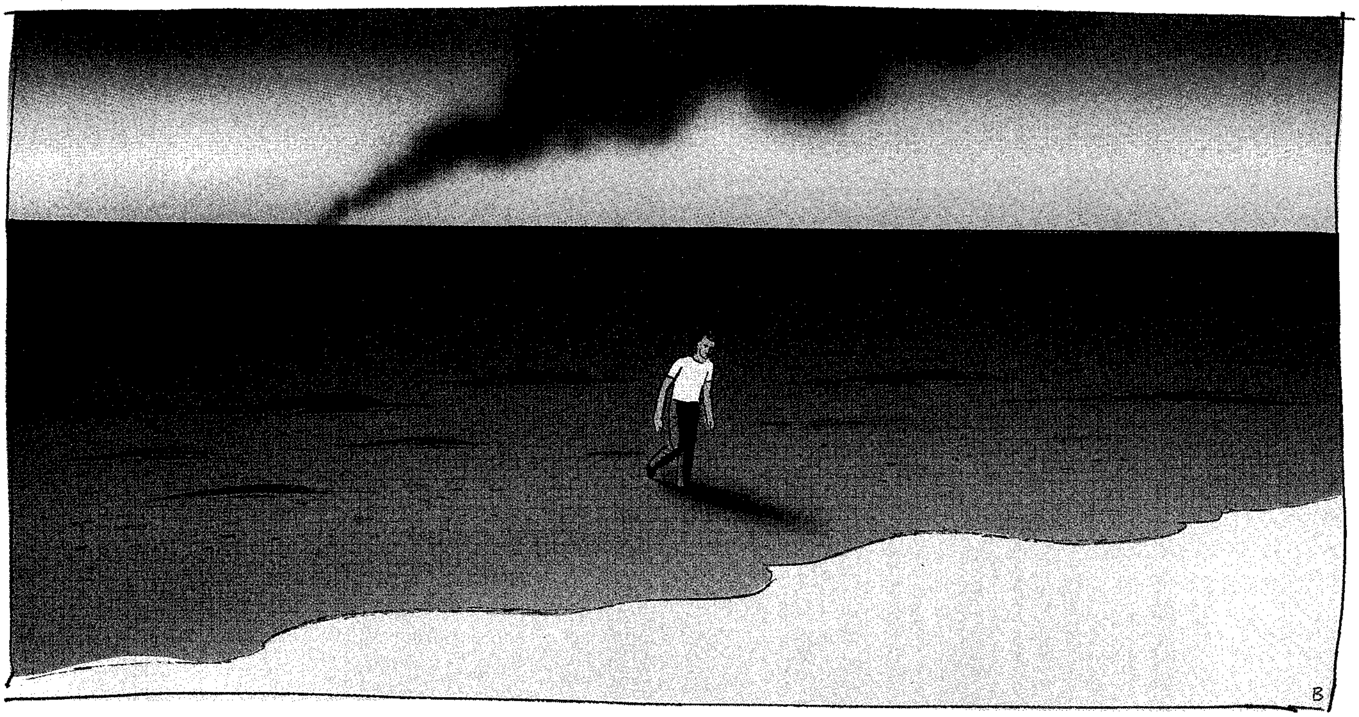
When it was the agent's turn, he revealed to the group that, at the time of the attacks, he had been sitting in a subway car, just short of the Fulton Street station. The train came to an abrupt halt, the air-conditioning went off, and the conductor announced that the train's doors were stuck. Passengers managed to pry open the doors; as they stepped onto the platform, a tremendous blast of black smoke filled the air. It blew a woman walking in front of the agent off her feet. He ran away from the billowing smoke, and soon found himself pressed up against a turnstile exit that wouldn't budge. The crowd pushed behind him, and he began to struggle for air. ("I said to myself, 'I'm not dying here,'" he told the group.) He broke free of the mob and found a stairwell; when he arrived at street level, the air was so dark with soot that he still felt as if he were trapped underground. He walked north and eventually got home.

"I told what happened to me, and people started crying," he recalled. A colleague said she had made her way to the pier where she usually catches a ferry to her home in New Jersey. "She told everyone how she came across a dazed co-worker walking aimlessly in the darkness, and how they both saw people jumping into the water even though there was no boat there," he said. Another employee from the Liberty Street branch spoke vividly about watching bodies fall from the towers.

I asked the agent whether he had chosen to attend the debriefing. "Well, they felt everyone should participate," he said. When he was asked if it had been helpful, he shrugged and said that, like most of his Liberty Street colleagues, he was relatively numb during the debriefing. "Some people burst into tears," he said. "But the people who were really crying hadn't even been downtown."

At the end of the session, the two counsellors gave telephone numbers to the workers and encouraged them to call if they felt distressed. The travel agent had nightmares for weeks after the debriefing, and often felt as if he were choking. Images similar to the ones he had described during the session would flash through his mind. He didn't pursue further therapy, though. "I had to take care of my family; they rely on me," he explained. After several months, he said, the flashbacks and the sense of choking subsided. "You just block it out," he said. "You have to get on with life."

The director of human resources at the travel agent's company told me that she had arranged the debriefing session because "it made me feel that I was doing something for the employees." She went on, "I saw behavior that worried me, people very upset after the attacks. I didn't want the company to seem unfeeling." Another concern that leads companies to hire debriefing services is the fear of litigation. Employees who have experienced a traumatic incident on the job, and who have subsequently been sidelined by P.T.S.D., have sued their companies. The



*Most grief counselling reflects a cultural bias: that a single outpouring of emotion—one good cry—can heal a scarred psyche.*

GUY BILLOUT

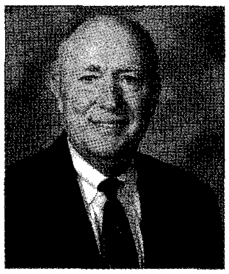
advertisement

ON THE TOWN

Be the first to hear about events, promotions, and special offers from New Yorker advertisers.

DID YOU KNOW?

One of the greatest battles that this former brigadier general has faced is the fight against hunger.



As the executive director of the Greater Chicago Food Depository—one of the nation's largest food banks—Michael P. Mulqueen oversaw the distribution of more than forty-two million pounds of food last year alone. After serving in the United States Marine Corps for thirty years, Mr. Mulqueen notes, "I went from a lifetime of service to my country to a life of service to my community."

Under Mr. Mulqueen's leadership, the Depository has grown to serve six hundred food pantries, shelters, day care centers, senior facilities, and soup kitchens. "The leadership and managerial positions I held in the Marines have served me exceedingly well in the not-for-profit sector," Mulqueen remarks.

Armed with skills from his military past and a vision of a better future, Mulqueen brings help and hope where it is most urgently needed.

The qualities you acquire while in the MILITARY are qualities that stay with you forever.℠

TODAY'S MILITARY

See it for what it really is.℠

1.866.VIEW NOW

Active • Guard • Reserve

For more information, log on to www.newyorker.com and click on The New Yorker ReaderLink.

Web site for National Employee Assistance Providers claims that its debriefing program insures "that the productivity of the work unit is not impaired."

Hundreds of similar debriefing sessions took place in Manhattan in the days following the September 11th attacks. Did they help? One debriefing company told me that 99.7 per cent of the participants found the sessions beneficial. But such evaluations are subjective, and hardly scientific. In fact, only in the past few years has debriefing undergone serious scrutiny. Brett Litz, a research psychologist at Boston Veterans Affairs Medical Center who specializes in post-traumatic stress disorder, recently completed a randomized clinical trial of group debriefing of soldiers who were stationed in Kosovo. (Peacekeeping forces there were exposed to sniper fire and mine explosions, and discovered mass graves.) He summarized the academic verdict on debriefing as follows: "The techniques practiced by most American grief counsellors to prevent P.T.S.D. are inert."

Clinical trials of individual psychological debriefings versus no intervention after a major trauma, such as a fire or a motor-vehicle accident, have had discouraging results. Some researchers have claimed that debriefing can actually impede recovery. One study of burn victims, for example, found that patients who received debriefing were much more likely to report P.T.S.D. symptoms than patients in a control group. It may be that debriefing, by encouraging patients to open their wounds at a vulnerable moment, augments distress rather than lessens it.

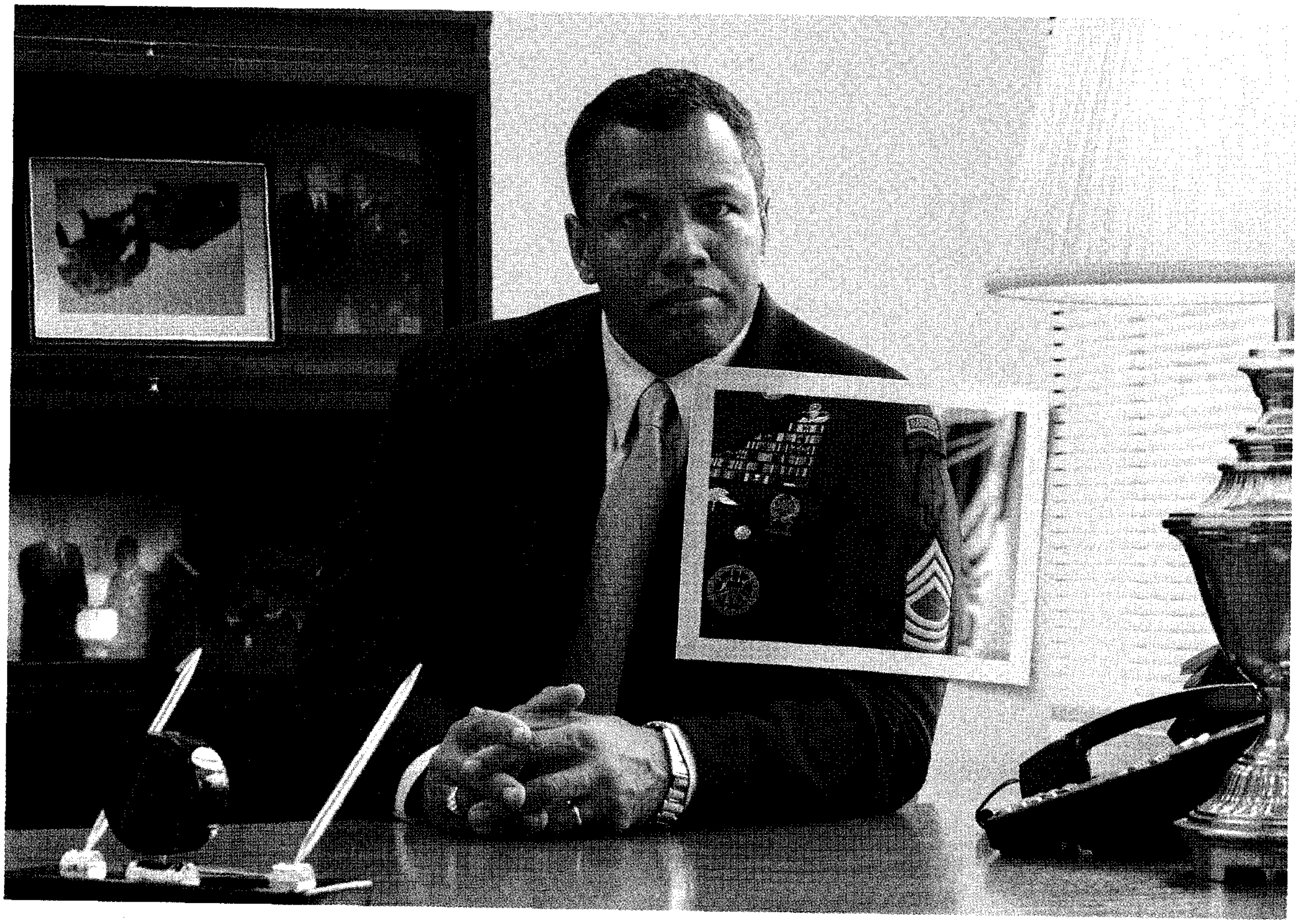
Mitchell, the movement's founder, told me that debriefing has been "distorted and misapplied" by some private companies, and noted that some negative findings stem from studies of these unorthodox variants. His technique, he added, is meant only for "homogeneous groups who have had the same exposure to the same traumatic event," and sometimes crisis counsellors brought together people who had experienced unrelated traumas. With firefighters who had, say, all watched one of their colleagues die, Mitchell said that his method had a "proven" beneficial effect. He could cite no rigorous clinical trials, however, in support of this claim.

Scientific studies suggest that, after a catastrophic event, most people are resilient and will recover spontaneously over time. A small percentage of individuals do not rebound, however, and require extended psychological care. The single intervention of a debriefing session does nothing to alter this consistent dynamic.

Despite the influx of counsellors into Manhattan, most New Yorkers received no therapy following the attacks. Furthermore, data from surveys taken after September 11th contradicted the early predictions that there would be widespread psychological damage. A telephone survey of nine hundred and eighty-eight adults living below 110th Street, conducted in October and November of 2001, found that only 7.5 per cent had been diagnosed as having P.T.S.D. (According to the American Psychiatric Association, a patient is said to have P.T.S.D. if, for a month or more after a tragic event, he experiences several of the classic symptoms: flashbacks, intrusive thoughts, and nightmares; avoidance of activities and places that are reminiscent of the trauma; emotional numbness; chronic insomnia.) A follow-up of this survey, in March of 2002, found that only 1.7 per cent of New Yorkers suffered from prolonged P.T.S.D. This finding indicates that the debriefing industry is predicated on a false notion: that we are all at high risk for P.T.S.D. after exposure to a traumatic event.

In the wake of a catastrophe like September 11th, Litz told me, victims should not be asked to disclose their personal feelings about the event. All that is needed is "psychological first aid": victims should be taken to a safe place, given food and water, and provided with information about the status of friends and family. None of this, he added, requires the presence of a trained psychologist.

In 1917, a traumatic event on a scale similar to that of the September 11th attacks took place in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Two ships collided near the dock, one of which was carrying explosives and benzene, a flammable liquid. The crew abandoned this ship, and it drifted to the dock, where it exploded and destroyed the entire north end of the city—an area encompassing two and a half square



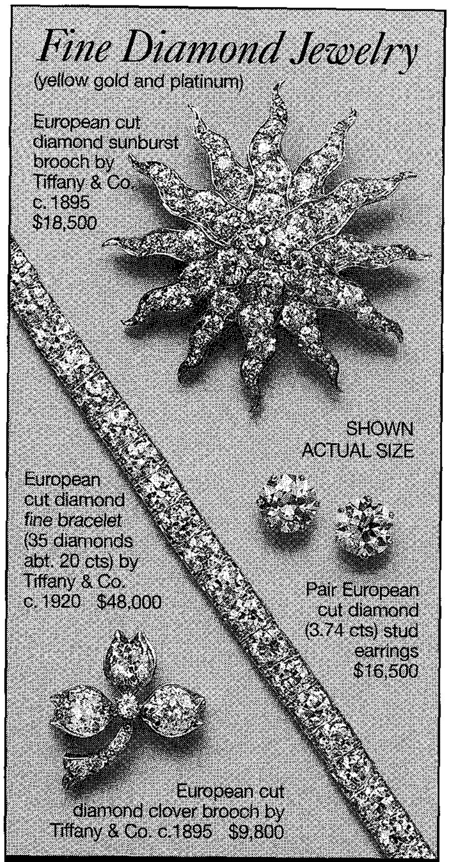
Security is a critical issue these days. Especially for high-profile leaders and dignitaries. No one understands this better than Mark Jones, Founder and CEO of a security-consulting firm. Mark is a man who earned the title of 'go-to guy' by being entrusted to jump from 13,000 feet with a former U.S. President. A man responsible for meeting different heads of state while serving as a Senior Aide to the 14th Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Someone who started out as a cook but quickly learned to convert one challenging task after another into opportunity. A Master Sergeant from the U.S. Army Rangers who, day after day, brought honor to three simple words, "Complete the mission."

## SENSE OF MISSION

– MARK "RANGER" JONES
UNITED STATES ARMY 1986-2003

The qualities you acquire while in the Military are qualities that stay with you forever.℠

**TODAY'S MILITARY**
See it for what it really is.℠
1.866.VIEW NOW
www.todaysmilitary.com
*Active • Guard • Reserve*



Fine Diamond Jewelry
(yellow gold and platinum)

European cut diamond sunburst brooch by Tiffany & Co. c. 1895 $18,500

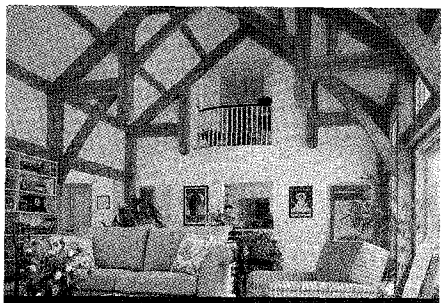
SHOWN ACTUAL SIZE

European cut diamond *fine bracelet* (35 diamonds abt. 20 cts) by Tiffany & Co. c. 1920 $48,000

Pair European cut diamond (3.74 cts) stud earrings $16,500

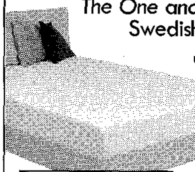
European cut diamond clover brooch by Tiffany & Co. c.1895 $9,800

FIRESTONE AND PARSON
No.8 Newbury Street, Boston, MA 02116
(617) 266-1858



SPACE, LIGHT & NATURAL MATERIALS MAKE OUR AWARD-WINNING HOMES.

TIMBERPEG®
The Artisans of Post & Beam.
1.800.636.2424
www.timberpeg.com



You Deserve the Best
The One and Only Tempur-Pedic Swedish Sleep System

Call today and start enjoying the benefits of a Tempur-Pedic mattress. Touted by sleep professionals worldwide this pressure-relieving viscoelastic bed molds to the weight and shape of your body to make sleeping easier.

TEMPUR-PEDIC
PRESSURE RELIEVING
SWEDISH MATTRESSES AND PILLOWS

LIMITED 20 YEAR WARRANTY

Now 1-800-Mattress® makes getting one easier.*

*Same day delivery available in many areas.

1-800-Mattress
mattress.com™

Call **1-800-736-8464** today and get 2 "Curvana" pillows **FREE** with your order.

miles. More than two thousand inhabitants were killed, and nine thousand were injured—many of them blinded and dismembered. The night after the explosion, a blizzard descended on Halifax, hindering the relief effort, and many people whose homes had been destroyed froze to death.

April Naturale is a psychiatric social worker who heads Project Liberty, a government-sponsored program that was established to coördinate the therapeutic response to September 11th. Not long ago, she went to Halifax to read archival materials on the 1917 accident. "Some of those who survived seemed psychotic, hallucinating for days," she told me. One woman continued to speak solicitously to someone named Alma—her dead child; other victims were in such a state of shock that doctors were able to perform surgery on them without using chloroform. But after a week or so these disturbing symptoms spontaneously subsided in the vast majority of cases. These accounts led Naturale to conclude that psychiatric intervention in the wake of such an event should be minimal; the mind should be given time to heal itself. In short, the "abnormal" behavior witnessed in the aftermath of the explosion was actually part of a healthy process of recovery.

Malachy Corrigan, the director of the Counseling Service Unit of the New York City Fire Department, was once a proponent of debriefing—but months before the September 11th attacks he decided that it was generally not a beneficial technique. "Sometimes when we put people in a group and debriefed them, we gave them memories that they didn't have," he told me. "We didn't push them to psychosis or anything, but, because these guys were so close and they were all at the fire, they eventually convinced themselves that they did see something or did smell something when in fact they didn't." For the workers in the pit at Ground Zero, Corrigan enlisted other firefighters to be "peer counsellors" and to provide moral support and educational information about the possible mental-health impact of sustained trauma.

"It was like one huge extended family," Corrigan recalled. "We gave them a lot of information about P.T.S.D., as well as about the burden that they would be putting on their own families. We quite boldly spoke about alcohol and drugs. And we focussed on the anger that comes with grief, because the members were more than happy to display those symptoms. You are speaking their language when you talk about alcohol and anger. The simpler you keep the mental-health concepts, the easier it is to engage them."

Naturale sees the approach that Corrigan took, with peers providing basic comforts, as the paradigm for civilians as well as for rescue workers. "Non-mental-health professionals do not pathologize," she said. "They don't know the terminology, they don't know how to diagnose. The most helpful approach is to employ a public-health model, using people in the community who aren't diagnosing you."

Scientists are now trying to determine what causes some people to fall victim to P.T.S.D. after a traumatic event like the September 11th attacks. Rachel Yehuda, a neuroscientist at the Bronx Veterans Affairs Medical Center, has studied both combat veterans and Holocaust survivors, and has found that people with P.T.S.D. have significantly lower baseline levels of cortisol, a hormone that is released in the body during moments of stress. Cortisol, Yehuda theorizes, acts as a counterbalance to adrenaline, which is thought to play a role in the "imprinting" of horrific and intrusive memories. She speculates that the lack of cortisol allows adrenaline to act unopposed, so to speak—and this contributes to the development of P.T.S.D.

Vulnerability to P.T.S.D., Yehuda added, also depends in part on the intensity and duration of the trauma. Someone who witnessed the fall of the towers from afar is not as likely to develop the disorder as someone who worked on the fiftieth floor of Tower One and only narrowly escaped. An injury can also help precipitate P.T.S.D., and the disorder is more likely to affect a civilian bystander than someone who is trained to face dangerous situations, like a police officer. A study performed thirty-four months after the Oklahoma City bombing found that the rate of P.T.S.D. was twenty-three per cent among male civilian victims and only thirteen per cent among firefighters.

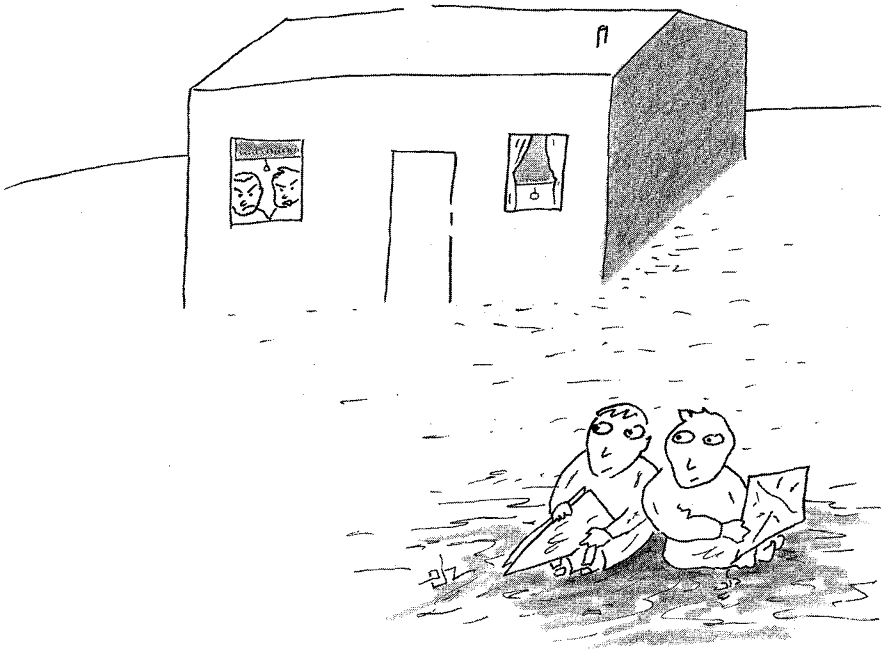
Other studies have found that people who are at greatest risk for P.T.S.D. have a history of childhood abuse, family dysfunction, or a preëxisting psychological disorder. In order to properly combat P.T.S.D., Yehuda told me, we need to have a baseline mental-health profile on everyone. "Why don't we have a doctor check our stress level?" she asked. "Just like doctors check our cholesterol."

A 1996 study of American pilots who were prisoners of war in North Vietnam underscores the importance of baseline mental health. Although the pilots endured years of torture and, in many cases, solitary confinement, they showed a very low incidence of P.T.S.D.—presumably because pilots are screened for psychological health and trained for high-stress combat.

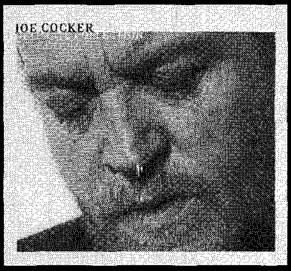
Although there are no published studies on P.T.S.D. among rescue workers at Ground Zero, Corrigan, who has assessed many of these individuals, says it is relatively low. He estimates that, of about fifteen thousand firefighters and emergency personnel, fewer than a hundred have developed full-blown P.T.S.D. "There were a lot of therapy experts here in New York who were quite happy to tell everyone that firefighters would have P.T.S.D.," he told me. "But these folks have tremendous resiliency. People say firefighters are crazy to put themselves at risk, but they are mentally very healthy. They can sustain enormous amounts of stress and continue to function."

Some of the most promising treatment interventions for people with P.T.S.D. have been developed by Edna Foa, a professor of psychology at the University of Pennsylvania. Twenty years ago, she began a research project involving rape victims in the Philadelphia area. "Most women recover," Foa told me. "Only about fifteen per cent will develop P.T.S.D. symptoms." For these women, Foa devised a technique to "restore resilience," based on cognitive behavioral therapy. The victim is slowly taught to restructure her reactions to her memories of the rape. First, a therapist sits with the woman and asks her to close her eyes and recount the event in detail. (Unlike group debriefing, this takes place months after the event and is performed one on one.) Then the woman is told to repeat the story. Subsequent therapy sessions span some thirty to forty-five minutes each and are taped so that the rape victim can listen to them at home. "The story changes as it is relived," Foa told me. "It becomes more organized, more flowing. A narrative emerges, with a beginning, a middle, and an end."

In contrast to classical psychotherapy, which attempts to link the patient's current feelings and behavior to previous events, Foa's treatment is focussed primarily on relieving symptoms of distress. After each session, the patient is given homework assignments that are simple and direct. She is instructed to make a list of "avoidance behaviors," such as not getting into an elevator because it reminds her of the scene of her



*Nobody Wanted the Wright Brothers to Succeed,*
*Least of All the Wrong Brothers Across the Street in that*
*Stupid Stucco House with the Dumb Green Shades.*



JOE COCKER
ULTIMATE
COLLECTION

JOE COCKER

THE FIRST AND ONLY
30 YEAR CAREER
RETROSPECTIVE!

20 CLASSIC TRACKS
SPANNING
FOUR DECADES!

FEATURING HIS CLASSIC
BEATLES' COVERS

*WITH A LITTLE HELP*
*FROM MY FRIENDS* AND

*SHE CAME IN THROUGH*
*THE BATHROOM WINDOW*

TIMELESS SONGS FROM THE
60'S, 70'S, 80'S AND 90'S LIKE

*YOU ARE SO BEAUTIFUL,*

*UP WHERE WE BELONG,*
WITH JENNIFER WARNES
FROM **AN OFFICER AND A GENTLEMAN**

*FEELIN' ALRIGHT,*

*UNCHAIN MY HEART,*

*WHEN THE NIGHT COMES,*

*DELTA LADY,*

*THE LETTER*

AND MANY MORE!

IN STORES NOW!

Available at Music Locations
**BARNES&NOBLE**
BOOKSELLERS
www.bn.com

www.cocker.com www.hip-o.com

Hip-O RECORDS A&M RECORDS

A UNIVERSAL MUSIC COMPANY

© 2004 Universal Music Enterprises.
A Division of UMG Recordings, Inc.

**Chef'sChoice®**
**Cordless Electric Teakettle**

Model 685

**Revolutionary Cordless Design!** Heating element is never in contact with water, so there's no build-up of objectionable mineral deposits on it.

**Elegant Design for Kitchen and Serving Area:** Teakettle lifts from corded base for easy filling and pouring.

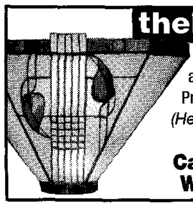
For the retailer nearest you, call:
**EdgeCraft**
**(800) 342-3255**
(610) 268-0500

© EdgeCraft 1999, Avondale, PA 19311 www.edgecraft.com

*Unforgettable...*
*Luxury Barge Cruises*

**FRENCH COUNTRY WATERWAYS, LTD.**
P.O. Box 2195, Duxbury, MA 02331
800-222-1236 781-934-2454

**Italy** **A great place for a walking or culinary tour.**
**When great isn't enough, try extraordinary.**
**Travel with the experts who live in Italy.**
**1-800-462-7911**
**www.italian-connection.com**



**thebrightspot.com**
Great website and catalog of lamps and lighting fixtures in Mission, Mica, Prairie, Arts & Crafts and Tiffany styles
*(Henderson Sconce by Dale Tiffany)*
**The Bright Spot, Inc.**
**Catalog: 1-800-736-0126**
**Web: thebrightspot.com**

## THE OTHERNESS

Of course there is the otherness,
right away inside you when
the doe steps carefully down
the embankment. Then clatter
of hoof and the dappled water
with leaf shade. The otherness
and the invisible until you came.

—*Linda Gregg*

violation, and record how anxious she feels when she listens to the tape or thinks about the rape. The therapist then instructs the woman to begin to go to places that remind her of the attack. Over time, this intentional exposure to cues and memories of the trauma shifts the so-called "locus of control" to the victim, who realizes that she can control her unpleasant and intrusive thoughts.

Foa, who is an Israeli, has taught her technique to therapists with the Israel Defense Forces. These therapists recently treated thirty soldiers who had severe P.T.S.D. Some had been in continuous psychotherapy until they received Foa's treatment, which typically requires only twenty hours of therapy. Twenty-nine of the thirty experienced a marked improvement in both their symptoms and their ability to function.

Neuroscientists and experimental psychologists are now mapping the circuits in the brain that could account for the success of Foa's treatment. For example, rats exposed to a tone and then given an electric shock learn to associate the tone with the shock, so that simply hearing the noise causes them to exhibit increased pulse, muscle contraction, and avoidance behavior—an analogue to P.T.S.D. If the tone occurs without the shock being given and is repeated on multiple occasions, the rats no longer respond with these anxiety symptoms. In a related experiment, Joseph LeDoux, a neuroscientist at New York University, made lesions in the prefrontal lobes of such fear-conditioned rats—in a part of the brain just behind the forehead. He then provided the tone without administering the shock; the animals were unable to extinguish their anxiety response, which suggests that the missing circuits play a critical role in stress management.

In recent years, Foa's technique has been used not only to treat P.T.S.D. but also to prevent it. Richard Bryant, a psychologist in Australia, has treated people who displayed sustained symptoms of acute anxiety after a motor-vehicle accident or an assault. In three randomized controlled trials, six months after the trauma, patients who had received treatment were three times less likely to develop P.T.S.D. compared with members of the control group, which received only supportive counselling.

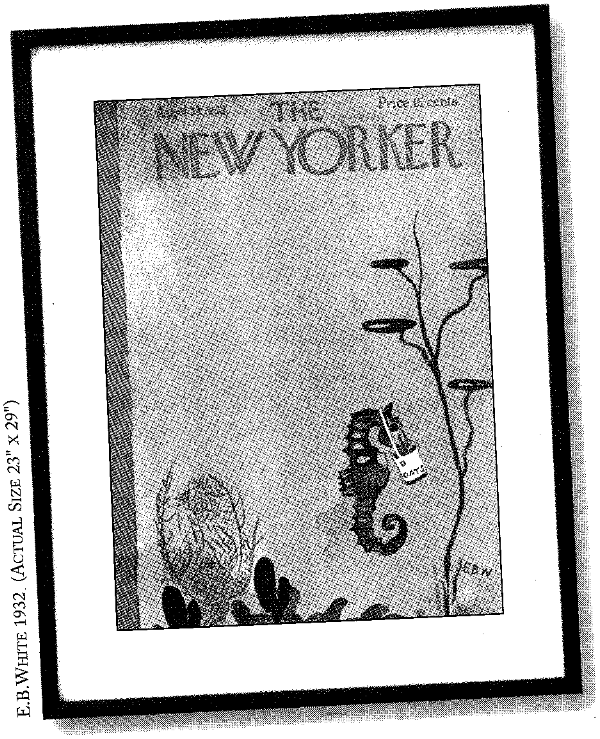
Despite considerable evidence in the United States and abroad showing that treatments like those developed by Foa can ameliorate established P.T.S.D.—and possibly help prevent the disorder in people with acute stress reactions—her approach has not been widely adopted. Most counsellors find cognitive-behavioral techniques unappealing. Dr. Steven Hyman is a neuropsychiatrist and the provost of Harvard University; in 2001, he was the head of the National Institutes of Mental Health. "When I was N.I.M.H. director, I was upset by how few people wanted to learn cognitive-behavioral therapy," Hyman told me. "Here was a therapy proven to be effective by clinical trials. But psychologists and psychiatrists are so interested in people, and they want to cure you with their understanding and empathy and connection. The cognitive-behavioral approach is by-the-book, mechanical, pragmatic. The therapists find it boring. It's not their idea of therapy, and they don't want to do it." Debriefing holds more allure for most counsellors, for it reflects a prevailing cultural bias; namely, that a single outpouring of emotion—one good cry—can heal a scarred psyche.

Foa's method has begun to find some

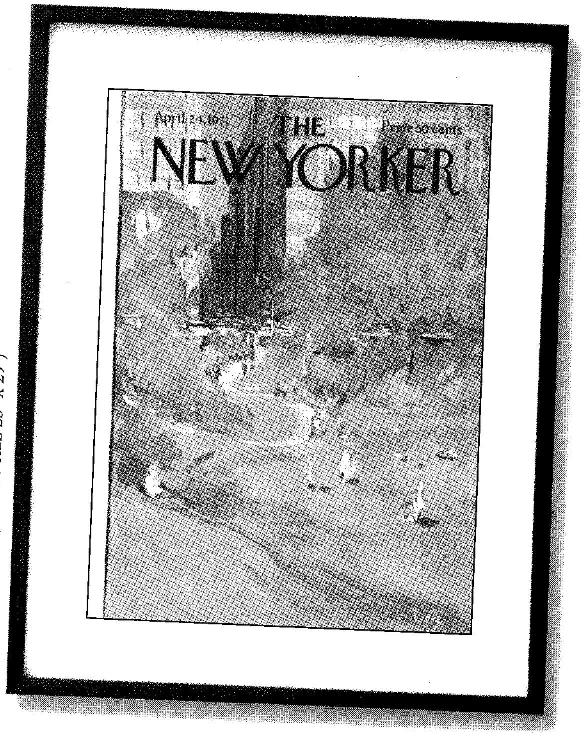
# CLASSIC COVER PRINTS

FROM THE NEW YORKER VINTAGE COVER COLLECTION

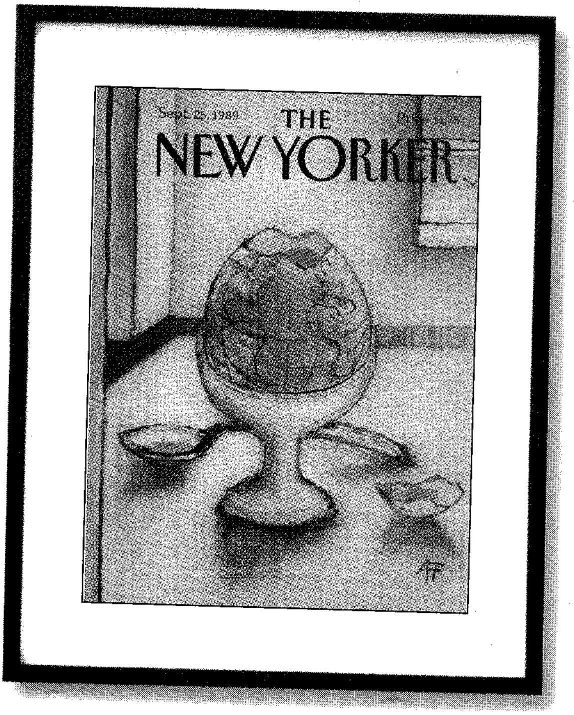
*available only at* THE CARTOON BANK


Price 15 cents
THE
NEW YORKER
E.B.W.

E.B. WHITE 1932 (ACTUAL SIZE 23" x 29")


April 24, 1971
THE
NEW YORKER
Price 50 cents

ARTHUR GETZ 1971 (ACTUAL SIZE 23" x 29")


Sept. 25, 1989
THE
NEW YORKER
AF

ANDRE FRANCOIS 1989 (ACTUAL SIZE 23" x 29")

Every cover in our Vintage Collection, 1925 to 1992, represents an exquisite moment in time. From simple and sublime, to bold and playful, each one is a little masterpiece. Hundreds to choose from. Search for your favorite artist, subject, or select a *New Yorker* cover with a special issue date. Available framed and unframed.

*Order online at*

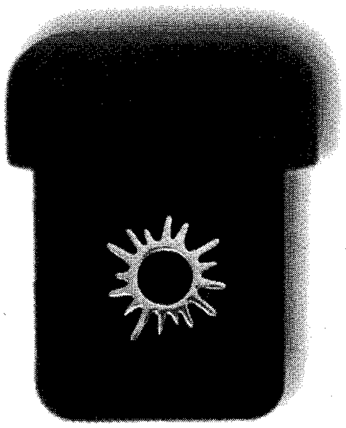
**WWW.CARTOONBANK.COM**

OR CALL 1-800-897-8666

CARTOONBANK.COM

*A New Yorker Magazine Company*

145 PALISADE STREET, SUITE 373 • DOBBS FERRY, NY 10522 • 1-800-897-TOON

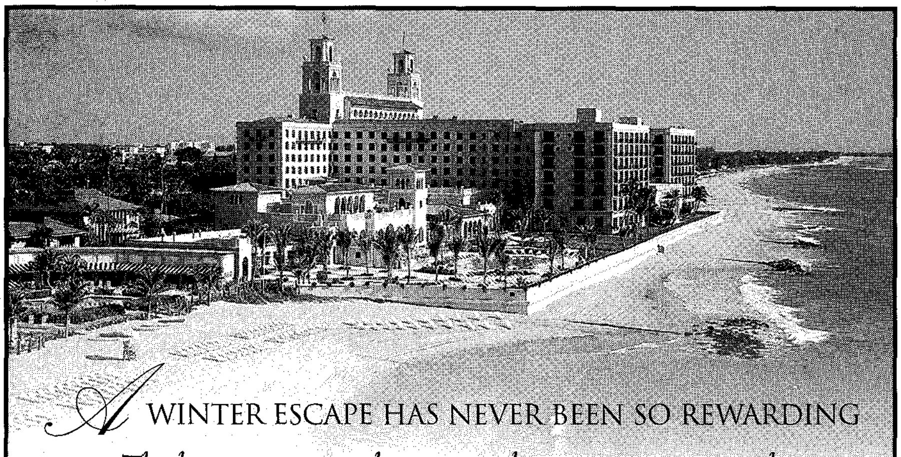


**One in five women is a smoker.**
**Here's what the other four can do to help her quit.**

Quitting smoking is one of the most difficult challenges a woman can face. Fortunately, it doesn't have to be done alone. Circle of Friends is a movement dedicated to supporting women who are trying to quit smoking. Show your support by wearing the Circle of Friends Sunburst Pin or by giving one to a friend. To purchase, visit www.qvc.com/sunburst or call 1-800-345-1515.

Legacy American Legacy Foundation
circle of friends UNITING TO BE SMOKE-FREE
QVC.

For more information about Circle of Friends, visit www.join-the-circle.org.



A WINTER ESCAPE HAS NEVER BEEN SO REWARDING

*The longer you stay this winter, the greater your rewards*

| $200* | $400* | $600* |
|---|---|---|
| per room based on stays of 3-4 nights | per room based on stays of 5-7 nights | per room based on stays of 8+ nights |

Enjoy these special rewards for retail purchases, dining, spa and salon treatments, golf, tennis, water sports, children's and family programs and cabana rental

THE BREAKERS®
PALM BEACH

**For reservations and information visit www.thebreakers.com, call toll-free 1-888-BREAKERS or contact your travel professional today.**

*Offer valid January 6–May 15, 2004. Resort credit is per room, per stay, applicable to all guest room and suite accommodations. Rates starting at $399 for a Standard Superior Room, single or double occupancy, subject to availability. Credit not valid toward daily room rate, scuba diving, snorkeling, baby-sitting, sports lessons, Giorgio's or in conjunction with any other offer. Excludes taxes and gratuities. Not available to groups. Blackout dates and other restrictions apply. Credit is non-refundable at check-out. Children 16 and under stay free in parents' room.

The Five Diamond Award AAA
one of The Leading Hotels of the World

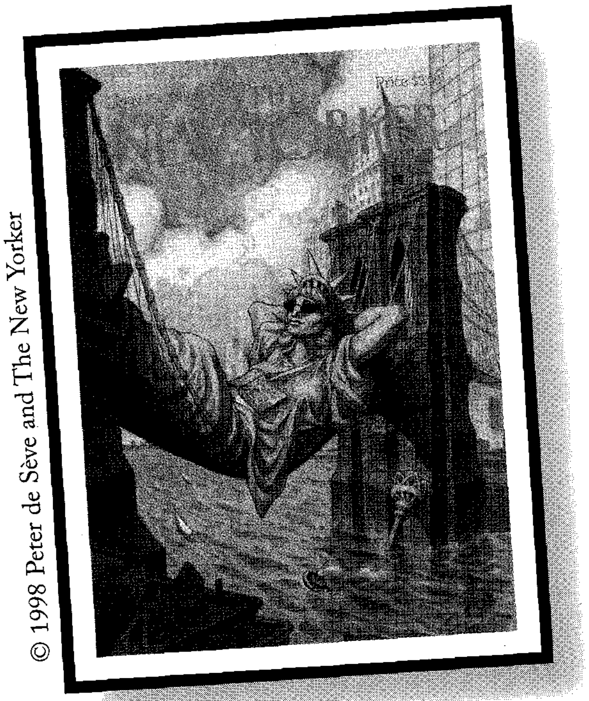
adherents. Malachy Corrigan, of the F.D.N.Y., now uses cognitive-behavioral techniques with several groups, including firefighters who narrowly survived the collapse of the towers. In November, 2001, Foa came to New York and trained forty therapists in her technique. Now Columbia University is offering seminars to therapists who are interested in learning Foa's approach.

At the same time, the scientific critique of debriefing has begun to have an impact. The Department of Defense, the Department of Justice, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the American Red Cross, and the Department of Health and Human Services have all abandoned it as a therapeutic method. Bruce Blythe's company, Crisis Management International, which is based in Atlanta, recently decided to discontinue its debriefing service. This week, the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology Task Force on Terrorism will release a paper recommending that debriefing be abandoned as a mainstream prevention method. Nevertheless, many for-profit companies in the so-called "grief industry" continue to offer single counselling sessions that are fundamentally linked to Mitchell's seven-step technique. And debriefing is still widely embraced; counsellors for the N.Y.P.D. and the Los Angeles Fire Department continue to use the method.

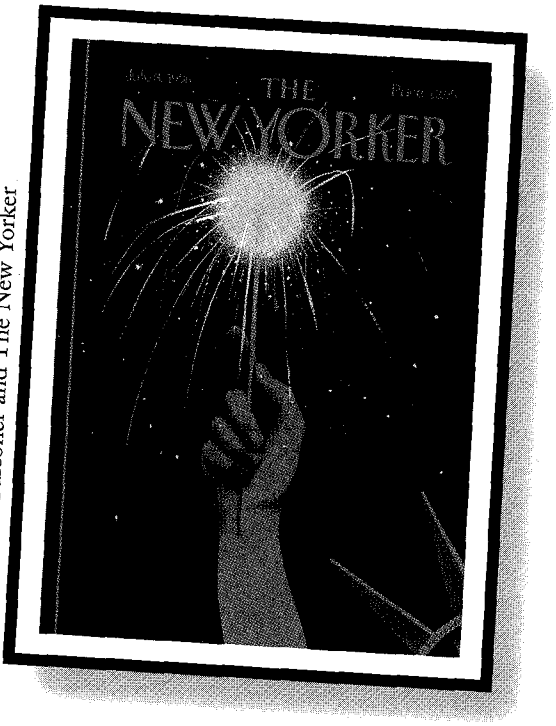
Perhaps the solution, Hyman said, is to drop the idea that "counselling" is necessary. He told me that the way we respond to individual or mass trauma should be guided by how we behave after the loss of a loved one. "What happens when someone in your family dies?" he said. "People make sure you take care of yourself, get enough sleep, don't drink too much, have food." Hyman pointed out the different rituals that various cultures have developed—shivah among Jews, for instance, and wakes among Catholics—which successfully support people through grief. "No one should have to tell anyone anything!" he said. "Particularly not in the scripted way of a debriefing." The traumatized person should share what he wants with people he knows well: close friends, relatives, familiar clergy. "It's so commonsensical," Hyman said. "But the power of our social networks—they are what help people create a sense of meaning and safety in their lives." ♦

# REOPEN LIBERTY'S DOORS

## A SPECIAL OFFER FEATURING PRINTS OF CLASSIC NEW YORKER COVERS



© 1998 Peter de Sève and The New Yorker



© 1996 Ian Falconer and The New Yorker

For nearly a hundred and twenty years, the Statue of Liberty has raised her torch over New York Harbor. Today she is closed to visitors. Now you have the opportunity to help raise money and make the statue a prized American destination once again. **If you use your American Express® Card to purchase one of these prints of New Yorker covers, 25% of the proceeds will go to the campaign to reopen the Statue of Liberty.** Show your support for Lady Liberty with this special offer.

LARGE PRINT (IMAGE SIZE: 16" x 22"), $250. SMALL PRINT (IMAGE SIZE: 7" x 9.5"), $125.
FRAMING AVAILABLE FOR AN ADDITIONAL CHARGE.

*Order online at*
WWW.CARTOONBANK.COM
OR CALL 1-800-897-8666

CARTOONBANK.COM
*A New Yorker Magazine Company*

LIBERTY ELLIS ISLAND
TM 1982, 1987 THE STATUE OF LIBERTY-ELLIS ISLAND FOUNDATION, INC.

**Learn more at**
**www.statueofliberty.org.**

AMERICAN EXPRESS ®

ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

### SHOUTS & MURMURS

# ARISTOTLE ON RELATIONSHIPS

### BY FRANK GANNON

> "Recently I read Aristotle's Poetics. It made me reevaluate all of the things I thought I knew, and it really sparked a fire in me. . . . It made me realize that there's no reason to reinvent the wheel. Every emotion you'll ever feel, everything you're ever gonna do in your life has been done for thousands of years, you know, especially relationships."
>
> —*Will Smith, in Book magazine.*

I propose to treat of sexual relationships of various kinds, noting the essential qualities of each.

Sexual relationships are of several types. They can be between a man and a woman, a man and a man, a woman and a woman, or many people and many other people. These sexual relationships differ from one another in many respects. The highest form of sexual relationship, however, is generally believed to be that which exists between two people—at least, only two people at the same time. Let us discuss sexual relationships primarily between a man and a woman.

Sex should be unified. Ideally, a sexual act should take the same amount of time for the man and the woman. The man and the woman should begin and end at the same time. If it takes the man ten minutes, it should take ten minutes for the woman. If a man takes longer than the woman, the woman may commence another sexual act (usually, but not always, with the same man) or she may just wander off. This is known by the common term *short attention span*.

The man should not begin, or end, his sexual act before the woman is present. If the woman appears while the man is engaged in his sexual act alone, this becomes the basis of comedy, as is embodied in Aristophanes' great work "What Do You Think You're Doing?"

If one woman and one man are taking part in an act of sex and the man's sexual act takes less time than the woman's sexual act, the woman may look at the man with a puzzled expression, as if to say, "Is that it?" Sometimes the woman may actually speak these words aloud, as occurs in Euripides' early play "Disappointment." This is classified as a lesser sexual act. It is unusual for this type of sexual act, consisting of the same two people, to be enacted more than once. A man who engages in a sexual act in this way with frequency may inspire the emotion known as *pity*, as in the case of Carsinius, although he denies that this is an issue. (I, however, have heard otherwise.)

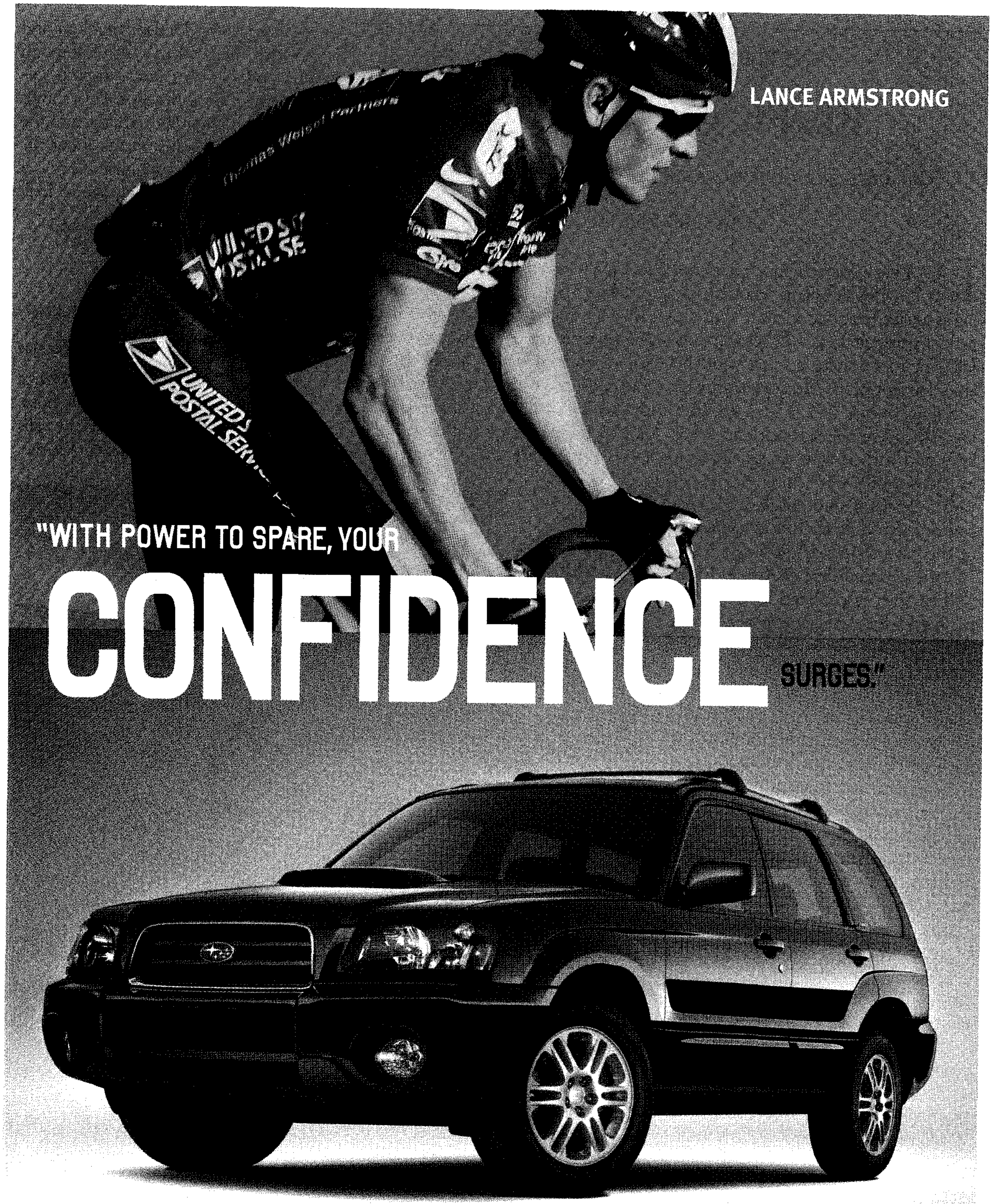
A sexual act, to be whole, must consist of a beginning, a middle, and an end. A well-constructed sexual act should contain nothing that does not relate directly to the sexual act. If a dog jumps on the bed during a well-constructed sexual act, the dog should become a part of the sexual act. This is, however, highly unusual, and could also be classified under the general term *disgusting*. The arrival of a dog usually merely interrupts the sexual act. This is characteristic of the worst type of sexual act, where the action stops and re-starts. Sometimes it does not re-start. This is called *not in the mood anymore*. The ending of this type of sexual act often involves the man and the woman sitting on the bed staring straight ahead. Sometimes a book or other reading material is used in the ending of this act. This is the worst type of sexual act, except, of course, the category "What Are You Doing?"

The best type of sexual act is one between a man and a woman, but not a man and a woman who are both all good and entirely without flaws. It also does not consist in sex between an all-bad man and an all-good woman; or, by the same principle, between an all-good man and an all-bad woman. A sexual act of this type is never totally satisfying. A sexual act between an all-good man and an all-bad woman is *highly unlikely*, and a sexual act between an all-bad man and an all-good woman is *a damn shame*. A sexual act between an all-good man and an all-good woman is *boring*. All of these sexual acts are of the lesser sort.

The emotions of *pity* and *fear* can be evoked by a sexual act involving a man and a woman who lie between the two extremes of good and bad. The highest form of *fear* occurs when a man who is not all good performs a sexual act with a woman who is also not all good, then another character who is also not all good—a character who has taken part in an earlier sexual act with the not all-good woman—enters before the end of the sexual act. This results in the downfall of the first not all-good man. A sexual act that ends with the *catastrophe* of the not all-good man evokes *pity* and *fear*. Aeschylus was the first to introduce *lawyers* into the scenario, which characters now routinely supply the ending to this type of sexual act.

The foregoing thus must suffice concerning this matter. Sexual acts were once much different than they are now, and sexual acts have advanced by slow degrees as each new element was added over time. Having passed through many changes, sexual relations found their natural form, and there they stopped. Many people, however, myself included, miss the masks. And the harnesses. Those were good. ♦

ARNOLD ROTH


LANCE ARMSTRONG
"WITH POWER TO SPARE, YOUR
CONFIDENCE
SURGES."

**SUBARU FORESTER® TURBO**

Inside the new Subaru Forester XT, you'll find the assertive power of a turbocharged 210-horsepower boxer engine and the assuring traction, balance and control of Symmetrical All-Wheel Drive. So whether maneuvering through crowded streets or a remote mountain road, you'll find the confidence to take on any obstacle, or opportunity, you come across. **1-800-WANT-AWD.**

**subaru.com**

SUBARU

*DRIVEN BY WHAT'S INSIDE*™

The ABC's of Safety: Air bags. Buckle up. Children in backseat.

### LETTER FROM CALIFORNIA

# RIVER OF ANGELS

*Can water again flow freely through L.A.—without swamping the city?*

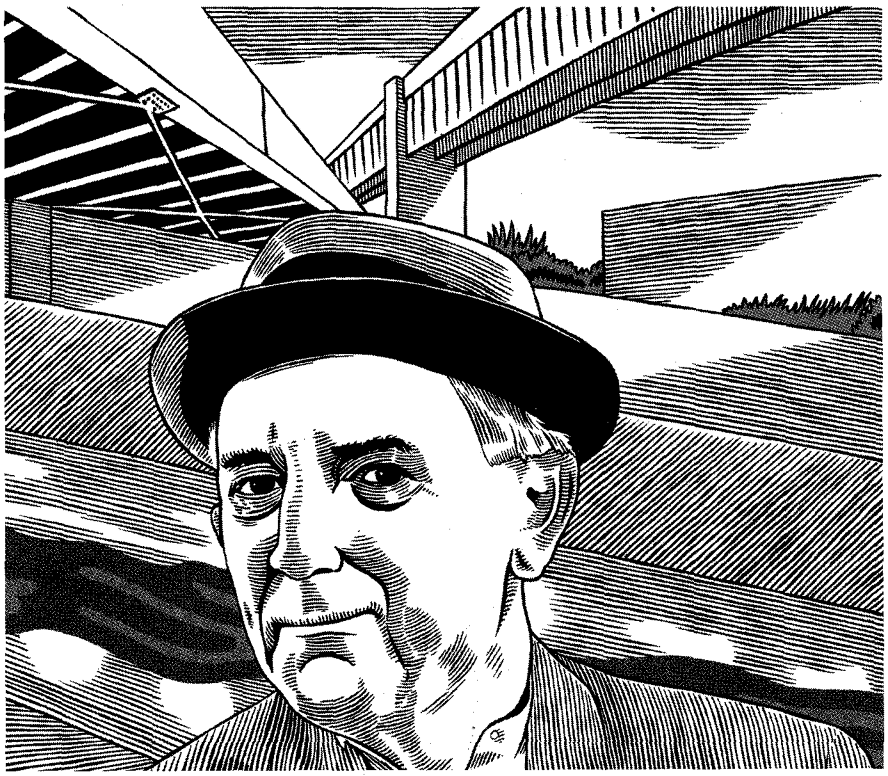
BY TAD FRIEND

It was a hazy May afternoon, and the poet Lewis MacAdams was trespassing as usual, in this case on the roof of the parking garage at the Los Angeles County Jail. The roof commands a view of the city's downtown, and MacAdams grinned and flung out his arm, as if to say, "Behold!" Below lay railroad tracks and power lines and barbed-wire fences that run in and out of a vast Union Pacific rail yard, a cluster of auto-salvage lots, and a concrete-crushing factory. In the midst of the prospect lay the object of MacAdams's devotion: the Los Angeles River.

The river is corseted in cement—poured in the nineteen-thirties by the Army Corps of Engineers to stop it from flooding—and further hemmed in by twelve crisscrossing freeways. Fenced off against would-be swimmers, its concrete banks tattooed with graffiti, referred to by local officials as a mere "flood-control channel," the river is nearly dry much of the year, and what water trickles through in high summer is mostly effluent from three sewage-treatment plants. The remainder of the dry-season flow is what one county official calls "urban slobber": storm-drain runoff carrying cigarette butts, pesticides, dog waste, Big Mac wrappers, and the occasional Yugo. Some carp and catfish manage to survive in the gunk, but they don't make good eating.

Because the river slinks along below ground level in many places, you have to climb and squint to actually see it. At the beginning of last season's pilot of "Boomtown," an NBC drama about Los Angeles, an elderly black man stands on a bridge and broods about the river. (Elderly black men serve the same role on television that crones serve in the Brothers Grimm.) "London's got the Thames, Paris's got the Seine, Vienna's got the Blue Danube," he says. "L.A.'s got a concrete drainage ditch."

Over the years, the river essentially vanished from the city's consciousness—while, courtesy of Hollywood, it remained vividly alive as a nameless and alien symbol of urban life. The moonscape that John Travolta drag-races along in "Grease"; the concrete trapezoid where Lee Marvin's contact in "Point Blank" gets shot and rolls down the culvert wall, dead; the geometric arroyo channels that Arnold Schwarzenegger and Edward Furlong weave their Harley through as they flee a cyborg in "Terminator 2"—that blank Corbusierian backdrop, that bulk of form without content, is the Los Angeles River.



*Lewis MacAdams calls his work to revive the river "a forty-year art project."*

MICHAEL KUPPERMAN

Los Angeles is often described as a hundred suburbs in search of a city, and the river's fifty-one-mile course embodies that search. The river emerges from beneath the Sepulveda Dam, in the San Fernando Valley town of Canoga Park; moves east behind Warner Bros. and Universal Studios; turns south at Glendale and shoots through downtown Los Angeles, passing Dodger Stadium and City Hall; then widens as it falls through Maywood, Cudahy, and Compton, before reaching Long Beach, where it shrugs the trash of a hundred suburbs into the Pacific. In one of his poems about the river, Lewis MacAdams pictures it as a sort of twilit departure lounge to hell:

Through a tunnel grey with couches
And people sleeping in abandoned
    automobiles,
the Arroyo meekly flows. . . .
Today there's
thirty guys with jackhammers, levelling
the river
ahead of an airport runway paving machine

MacAdams is fifty-nine. With a craggy, balding head and aquiline nose, and a willingness to be amused, he calls to mind a governor in ancient Rome. As a founder and the chairman of the board of Friends of the Los Angeles River, or FoLAR, he has for nearly twenty years fought to remove the concrete and restore a natural channel where steelhead trout can run upstream. "My goal is to get all the railroad tracks on this side of the river and put them underground," he told me, pointing east from the rooftop. "Then, eventually, we could have access to the river itself through parks all along the riverbank." MacAdams laughed and lowered his arm. He said, "If I were younger, I could definitely have a Robert Moses problem"—a reference to the builder who reshaped New York City by mapping out the Triborough Bridge, the United Nations, and numerous projects named after Robert Moses.

What one of MacAdams's environmentalist colleagues refers to as his "Aw, shucks, Ma'am, I'm just a poet" campaign has finally begun to take hold. In 2000, FoLAR and other environmental and civic groups sued to stop an industrial complex from being built on the Cornfield, a thirty-two-acre riverside parcel near Chinatown—and, to everyone's surprise, they won. The state purchased most of the land as a park and went on to buy forty more acres about two miles north, at Taylor Yard. California voters, though famously thrifty, passed ballot propositions that funded the seventy-six-million-dollar cost of those two parcels and set aside a comparable amount for future river projects.

"Lewis has mainstreamed the river issue," Eric Garcetti, a city councilman and a member of the council's newly formed ad-hoc committee on the river, says. "It's now on your standard politician's checkoff list, along with affordable housing, more cops and firefighters, and doing something about smog and earthquakes."

The biggest problem with MacAdams's vision is that it doesn't answer the question of what to do about the regional topography that makes the river such a flood risk. In the rainy season, from January to March, runoff from the San Gabriel Mountains to the east hurtles down bare, scissile arroyos and across the Los Angeles Basin, sweeping up gravel and boulders and stray S.U.V.s. A drop of water from the peak of the San Gabriels can take only twelve hours to reach the Pacific, largely because the Los Angeles River, the basin's chief conduit, plunges seven hundred and ninety-five feet in its fifty-one miles. (The river is often contrasted with the Mississippi, which falls only six hundred and five feet in its twenty-three-hundred-and-fifty-mile meander.)

"People would like to see a lush green channel going through there," Colonel Richard Thompson, commander of the Los Angeles District of the Army Corps of Engineers, acknowledges, "but the physics of it doesn't work." To be safe from flooding at the foot, a restored "natural" channel would have to be at least six times as wide as it is now—swamping land that is inhabited by thousands of people. And the city's momentum is carrying it away from nature, not back. A few years ago, transportation officials asked the Army Corps if it would be possible to pave over the water entirely and make the culvert into a freeway.

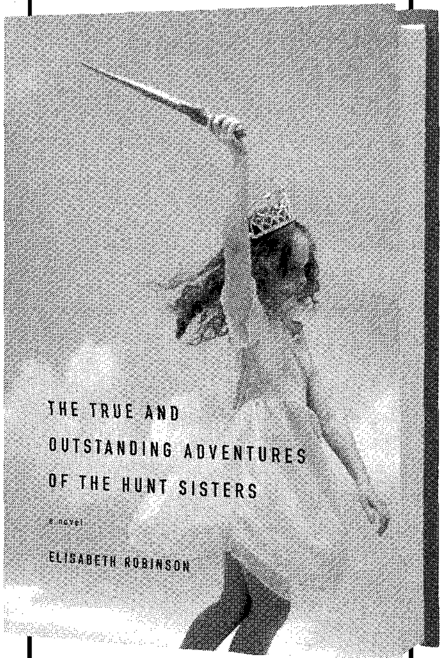
"There is something about Los Angeles that defeats the soul," says Tom Hayden, the liberal activist and former California state senator, who was instrumental in the effort to acquire the Cornfield and Taylor parcels. "It has to do with the triumph of the cementheads and with the cultivation of amnesia. We've had to organize saving the river around nostalgia, because there is a constituency for nostalgia in Los Angeles that rivals the constituency for amnesia."

From his perch on the roof, MacAdams said, "In the beginning, I called FoLAR a forty-year art work to heal the river and the city. I vastly underestimated how long it will take."

The Los Angeles River has always been what men required it to be. Blake Gumprecht, in his book "The Los Angeles River: Its Life, Death, and Possible Rebirth," recounts the river's social history, describing how early Spanish explorers first encountered the region, in 1769. Father Juan Crespi looked at the riverbed from a few miles north of Lewis MacAdams's perch atop the parking garage and envisaged paradise. "This spot can be given the preference in everything," he wrote, "in soil, water, and trees, for the purpose of becoming in time a very large plenteous mission."

Lush though it seemed, the Los Angeles Basin was a terrible place to situate a city. For one thing, it gets just fifteen inches of rain a year. Although the San Gabriel Mountains, which outline the basin, collect as much as forty inches a year, that water is difficult to use because it comes in bursts. (Santa Anita Canyon, near Pasadena, once received twenty-six inches in a day.) In 1825, the river made a sharp right turn west and headed through what is now Hollywood and Beverly Hills, a route to the Pacific that it maintained until 1867. During that period, most of the land from Newport Beach to Santa Monica was a floodplain,

THE "TENDER AND TEARFUL"* NOVEL THAT'S CAPTURING HEARTS EVERYWHERE.



"Scathingly funny."
—Emily Nussbaum,
*New York Times Book Review*

"A gift for comic timing....And then in the next moment, Robinson draws tears from the reader. Can we ask anything more from a novel?"
—Andrea Hoag,
*San Francisco Chronicle*

"THE TRUE AND OUTSTANDING ADVENTURES OF THE HUNT SISTERS helps us make sense of it all."
—*Lev Grossman,
*Time**

Also available as a Time Warner AudioBook™ and as an eBook.
Read an Excerpt Online at www.twbookmark.com

Little, Brown and Company
Time Warner Book Group

**Everlasting Love**

From our Celtic collection, a symbol for two people united in eternal love.

**No. 3385 Everlasting Love**
Earrings, fishhook, Sterling silver....$40
Earrings, fishhook, 14kt gold............325
Pendant, Sterling with 18" chain......30
14kt gold, without chain......................165
No. 2310 18" 14kt gold chain .......127
Shown full size
Add $6 handling. Satisfaction guaranteed.

***Request a catalog or visit our web site!***
Bosca® Leather Goods • Devold® Woolens
Filson® Clothing & Luggage • Akubra® Hats
Northwest Coast Indian Jewelry • Bills Khakis

**800-324-4934 www.davidmorgan.com**
**David Morgan**
11812 N Creek Pkwy N, Suite 103•Bothell WA 98011

Lucy

**Children's Books**
*by Sally O. Lee*

Lucy
Drageena's New Shoes
The ABC Coloring Book
Magdalena and the Golden Pear
Lucy's Halloween
Peony's Favorite Holiday
Tinkerella and The Blue Door

www.booksurge.com

**John Cage** (1912-1992)
Daughters of the Lonesome Isle
For prepared, string, bowed, conventional, and toy pianos, performed by Margaret Leng Tan.
'the most convincing interpreter of Cage's music'
-the New York Times
New Albion Records San Francisco www.newalbion.com

***RECORD YOUR OWN CD WITH FULL ORCHESTRA***
CONCERTORI
RECORDING
*....YOUR DREAM COME TRUE*
www.concertori.com

Discover The Magic Of Soapstone
America's finest wood & gas stoves are built with durable soapstone & cast iron. Soapstone holds twice as much heat as metal, and provides steady, penetrating warmth.
**FREE Catalog &Video**
**Toll Free 1-888-664-8188**
www.woodstove.com
Woodstock Soapstone, 66 Airpark, Dept.1722, W. Lebanon NH 03784

Chenango Valley Writers' Conference
**Colgate University**
**Hamilton, New York**
**June 20 – 26, 2004**
**www.cvwc.net**

boggy ground covered with willow, blackberry, and sycamore. Marc Reisner, in "Cadillac Desert," his history of water use in the West, writes, "Had humans never settled in Los Angeles, evolution, left to its own devices, might have created in a million more years the ideal creature for the habitat: a camel with gills."

As the city expanded, nearly quadrupling in population between 1910 and 1930, it became chronically thirsty, and the river was superseded by drinking water piped in from the giant Owens Valley and Colorado River aqueducts. In 1930, the landscape architects Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., and Harlan Bartholomew proposed that vast parks and parkways be built along the river and its wetlands, giving the city, which has the smallest per-capita park acreage of any major American metropolis, not only some much needed greenery but also a downtown anchor. By then, however, the river was widely considered an eyesore, the fit dumping ground of industry. In his book, Gumprecht observes that nostalgia for the river as a lost Eden is misguided, as it was never particularly beautiful, and "never the center of local life, as some modern-day environmentalists have supposed. . . . The river landscape, in fact, became the antithesis of the Arcadian ideal so central to the promotion of the region."

In 1934, forty-nine people were killed and a hundred and ninety-eight houses destroyed in a river flood; four years later, gully washers killed a hundred and thirteen people, cut the city off from the world for two days, and even forced the postponement of the Academy Awards. The city's leaders petitioned the Army Corps of Engineers to protect them, effectively scuttling the Olmsted parks plan. In keeping with the public-works spirit of the Depression, the Corps, between 1934 and 1959, at a cost of five billion in today's dollars, encased the Los Angeles River and its many tributaries in three and a half million barrels of cement.

The river was now, the Corps proclaimed, a "water freeway," where currents could reach speeds up to forty-five miles per hour. The concrete prevented groundwater from upwelling naturally into the riverbed, except in a few places where the river retained a soft natural bottom. In summer, the channel was nearly dry, and soon enough the "water" part of the "water freeway" idea faded away. By the nineteen-fifties, according to "Rio L.A.," by Patt Morrison, commuters were veering off the snarled Golden State and Ventura freeways and driving home down the riverbed, which became known as the "poor man's freeway." Toyota later used the concrete pan to test-drive cars, and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority used it to train bus drivers.

Because three sewage plants release their effluent into the channel, part of the channel now resembles a giant water slide. But playing in the currents is risky as well as illegal; on average, half a dozen people drown each year. A video shown to all city schoolchildren, entitled "No Way Out," refers to the system's water as "horribly nasty" and calls its low-head dams—the hydro-engineering equivalent of speed bumps—"drowning machines."

It is this no man's land that Hollywood displays to the world. "In movies, the river is a symbol of the ass end of Los Angeles," Robert Towne, the screenwriter of "Chinatown," the seminal film about the city's desire for water, says. "It's seen as a place where the run-off of society resides, where car chases happen and dope deals are done. It's an arid landscape, used to suggest the arid nature of the city." The classic 1954 horror film "Them!" posited that ten-foot mutant ants, created by atomic-bomb tests, infest the river's storm drains, and there is a perennial rumor in the schools that the river was paved over to serve as an escape route in the event of nuclear holocaust. This scenario is alluded to in "Repo Man," where Harry Dean Stanton drives Emilio Estevez down the riverbed and warns him, "There's going to be some bad shit coming down one of these days, kid," and when it does "I'm going to be right here, heading north at a hundred and ten per."

In a small office in Koreatown, Lewis MacAdams was meeting with two leaders of the Pacific American Volunteer Association, a community group consisting largely of Koreans. PAVA had promised to bring two thousand people to La Gran Limpieza, FoLAR's annual Los Angeles River cleanup, and to barbecue a thousand pounds of beef to feed them. With the two-day cleanup drawing near, MacAdams sensed discord in the room.

"This year's cleanup is the most difficult one ever—we're cleaning eleven sites," he began. "It's going to be the biggest river cleanup in the history of the United States! And I want you guys to know that you are the most important of the people I'm seeing this week." He suddenly turned pragmatic. "Now, Saturday morning, 9 A.M. at your cleanup site, what's happening?"

Tiger Kang, PAVA's burly, upbeat president, ticked off his concerns: FoLAR had not provided nearly enough work gloves, sodas, and snacks. The cleanup would be a disaster.

Sam Han, PAVA's chairman for the cleanup, began listing his own complaints. "We had thought this would be a tremendous opportunity, through FoLAR, to put Japanese, Taiwanese, and Koreans together and exchange cultures," Han said. "We are minorities, and we had wanted to be part of the melting." The Japanese hadn't responded as enthusiastically as Han had hoped.

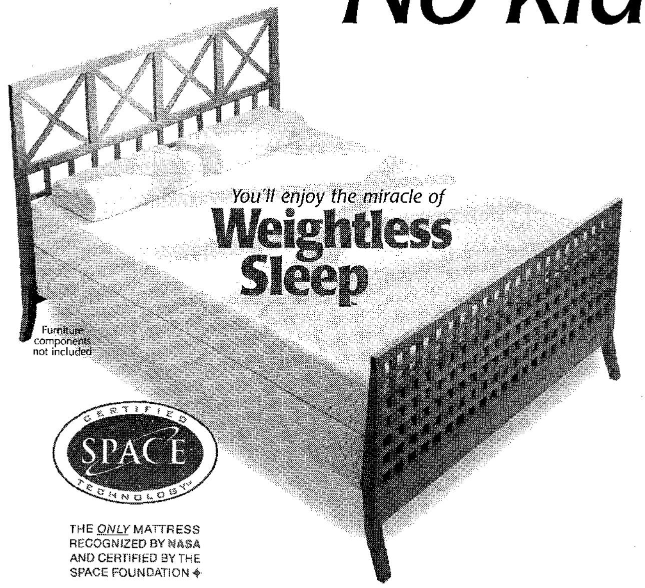
"Absolutely!" MacAdams interjected. Turning to me, he continued, "I went with Sam when he challenged the Japanese community to match the Koreans on the cleanup and said he doubted they could. I thought a riot was going to break out!" Han blushed and grinned.

MacAdams excels at this sort of boosterism, at cajoling volunteers with his mild Texas twang. "There are hundreds of people who do stuff on the river now," he told me later, referring to such organizations as North East Trees, Heal the Bay, and the Sierra Club. "But people need to relate to the river through a person, and I appear to have become that person, the river daddy." MacAdams takes a ward heeler's satisfaction in the strategizing. He enjoyed huddling with the Chinese Tongs to plot the Cornfield campaign, and scheming, with a co-conspirator named Tom LaBonge, to persuade the city sign painters to place unofficial "Los Angeles River" signs on all the river's bridges. (MacAdams says the inducement was a few fifths of bourbon; LaBonge, who is now a city councilman, remembers it as pumpkin pie.)

"Three years ago, we didn't know the river existed, and now we have educated everyone," Han said, more cheerfully. "We have printed one thousand certificates for our volunteers," he added, handing MacAdams a sample. The form, co-signed by FoLAR's executive director, said, "In Rocognition [sic] Of Your 5 Hours Of Community Service."

"As a writer, I find this too painful," MacAdams said, shuddering. Later, he photocopied a thousand corrected certificates at his own expense. MacAdams, who graduated from Princeton, usually makes less than thirty thousand dollars a year, most of it from magazine

No springs. No air. No water.
No kidding!


You'll enjoy the miracle of
Weightless Sleep
Furniture components not included
CERTIFIED SPACE TECHNOLOGY
THE ONLY MATTRESS RECOGNIZED BY NASA AND CERTIFIED BY THE SPACE FOUNDATION

No better bed than Tempur-Pedic.

Our Weightless Sleep bed embodies an *entirely new* sleep technology. It's recognized by NASA. And widely acclaimed by the media. It's recommended worldwide by more than 25,000 medical professionals. Moreover, our high-tech bed is preferred by countless stars and celebrities, people who demand the best.

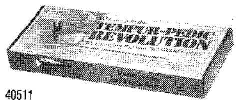
Our scientists invented an amazing viscoelastic sleep surface: TEMPUR® pressure-relieving material. It reacts to bodyshape, bodyweight, *bodyheat*. Nothing mechanical or electrical. Yet it molds precisely to your every curve.

Tempur-Pedic brings you a relaxing, energizing quality of sleep you've never experienced before. That's why 91% of our enthusiastic owners recommend us to their friends and relatives.

Please call us toll-free, without the slightest obligation, for a FREE DEMONSTRATION KIT!

TEMPUR-PEDIC®
PRESSURE RELIEVING
SWEDISH MATTRESSES AND PILLOWS

Free Sample/Free Video/Free Info
FREE IN-HOME TRYOUT CERTIFICATE
YOURS FOR THE ASKING!



888-359-8418
Call toll-free or fax 866-795-9367

© Copyright 2004 by Tempur-Pedic Direct Response, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Tempur-Pedic, Inc., 1713 Jaggie Fox Way, Lexington, KY 40511

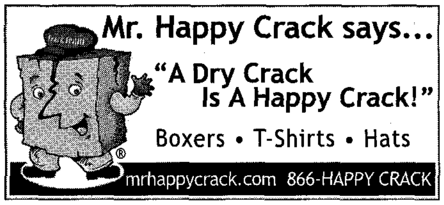
LET'S TAKE A VICTORY LAP.

A 2004 CONSUMERS DIGEST BEST BUY- SPORTY CAR SEGMENT.
MINIUSA.COM ©2004 MINI, a division of BMW of North America, LLC.

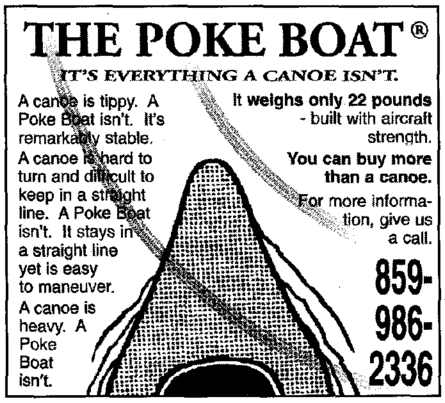
JOHN CHRISTIAN
DESIGNERS & CRAFTSMEN
Order by Feb 11 for Valentine's Day Delivery!
Diamond Wheel Pendant
YOUR NAMES & DATES
14K GOLD $790
(Omega chain sold separately)
3 DAY RUSH AVAILABLE - FREE CATALOGUE
RINGBOX.COM 1-888-646-6466

Looking to buy an apartment in PARIS?
Real Estate Broker and Paris native can help you navigate the complicated French real estate market.
PARIS IMMO REALTY
CATHERINE AUBALE EPSTEIN
415-221-9594 - caubaleepstein@aol.com

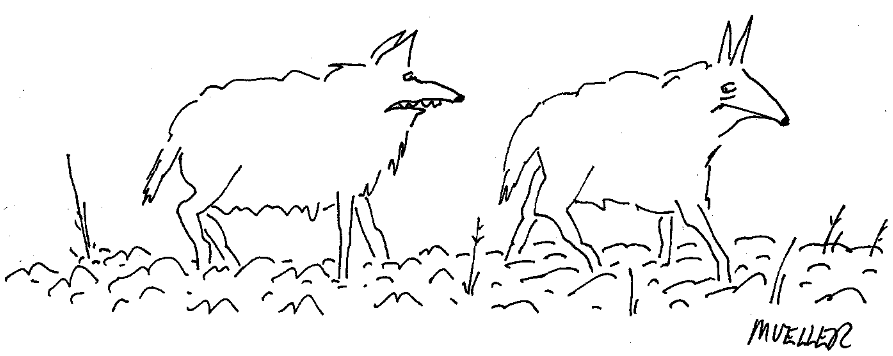
10 Million Pieces!
China, Crystal, Silver, Collectibles
183,000 Patterns • Old/New • Buy/Sell
REPLACEMENTS, LTD.®
1-800-REPLACE (1-800-737-5223)
PO Box 26029, Greensboro, NC 27420 • Dept YO
www.replacements.com®



Mr. Happy Crack says...
"A Dry Crack Is A Happy Crack!"
Boxers • T-Shirts • Hats
mrhappycrack.com 866-HAPPY CRACK



THE POKE BOAT®
IT'S EVERYTHING A CANOE ISN'T.
A canoe is tippy. A Poke Boat isn't. It's remarkably stable.
A canoe is hard to turn and difficult to keep in a straight line. A Poke Boat isn't. It stays in a straight line yet is easy to maneuver.
A canoe is heavy. A Poke Boat isn't.
It weighs only 22 pounds - built with aircraft strength.
You can buy more than a canoe.
For more information, give us a call.
859-986-2336



*"That kid we raised is tracking us."*

• •

writing, yet he accepts little or no compensation from FoLAR. "That's been a source of contention with my wife since Day One," he told me.

The discussion at PAVA turned to parking at the cleanup site, in the Elysian Valley, a largely Latino neighborhood in downtown L.A. "The local people complain about our taking all the spots," MacAdams said.

"We're making the ugliness in their community beautiful," Han said. "They should be thankful!"

"Yeah, yeah," MacAdams said. "Next year, we'll include them in the cleanup and they'll be thankful." In truth, many people who live next to the channel view the river cleanup with distrust. Eric Garcetti, whose district includes the Elysian Valley, says, "You ask the average person in my district about his vision for the river, and it's not 'We need to clean it up and take out the concrete.' It's 'Get rid of the graffiti and the homeless people and drug dealers along the river first.' When we were looking to build additional pocket parks there, the residents said, 'Screw the river! We want a skate park!' "

MacAdams recognizes that the purity of his vision for the river is a convenient falsehood. As soon as the Cornfield and Taylor Yard parcels were purchased, local leaders and environmentalists began fighting about whether they should be planted with native grasses or turned into soccer fields for local children. And MacAdams is concerned that real-estate prices next to the Cornfield might rise now that it is a park-in-waiting. He says, "I've learned that when you put parks in working-class neighborhoods, suddenly working-class people can't afford to live there."

After forty minutes in PAVA's office, MacAdams had reassured its leaders on most points, and Sam Han grew expansive. "Wait till you see our busloads," he said. "Next year, we'll have ten thousand people."

MacAdams's first gesture toward the river, in 1985, was mounting a one-man show called "Friends of the Los Angeles River," at the Wallenboyd Theatre. "That was a period when I was really out there," he says, "so in the first act I was painted completely green and wore a white suit, and I became William Mulholland"—the man who inspired "Chinatown"—"and in the second act I turned myself into various river animals: an owl, a hawk, a rattlesnake, a frog. Everybody hated it!" The Los Angeles *Times* review suggested that "with friends like MacAdams, the river needs no enemies." MacAdams himself says, "My girlfriend left me over it. She thought it was such bad art that there was probably something wrong with me."

FoLAR, which was founded the following year, was regarded as little more than a joke until 1989. That was the year Tom Bradley was reëlected mayor after making a campaign promise to "green" the river. It was the year of FoLAR's first Gran Limpieza, with thirty volunteers. (The early cleanups collected such garbage as a hot tub, a bloody Santería sword, and a human skull.) And it was also the year that a state assemblyman from the San Fernando Valley wrote an op-ed piece in the *Times* suggesting that the river be turned into a "bargain freeway."

In 1995, FoLAR led a group of environmental organizations that sued the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works over a plan to raise the levee walls along the last twelve miles of the river. In 1980, a storm had brought water to the top of the channel, and the Army Corps of Engineers realized that the city had become so overdeveloped that eighty-two square miles of downstream Los Angeles County were at risk of being flooded. When the suit halted the project for two years, FoLAR was vilified by downstream homeowners, five hundred thousand of whom had to buy flood insurance at an average cost of four hundred dollars a year. Donald Waldie, a writer and the public-information officer for the downstream city of Lakewood, was one of MacAdams's most vocal critics. "The drainage-project fight was a class issue," Waldie told me. "The middle-class Anglos upstream, like Lewis, felt that the river was a victim of environmental injustice, and that it needed to be set free. The working-class and working-poor people downstream, where flooding actually occurs, thought of the river not as a victim but as a threat."

The suit was settled in 1996, and the Corps began building smaller walls than had originally been planned. The long negotiations had led to a softening of the "cementhead" mentality. The Public Works Department recently joined with an environmental group to carry out a watershed-management project near the Burbank Airport. Rather than funnelling all rainwater in the Sun Valley area to the river—the traditional approach—they're planning to divert it to the groundwater through a system of reservoirs. "It was bitter, being ground into dust by the Corps and the county," MacAdams says, "but it did change the way people look at that river. There would never be another concrete project like that proposed now."

At 9 A.M. on the first day of the river cleanup, seventy ninth graders and seventy third graders joined city officials and television crews by the riverside. To get there, everyone ducked through a hole in a chain-link fence off the Route 2 entrance ramp, at Fletcher Drive near Silver Lake. Among the trespassers were Mayor James Hahn and Councilman Tom LaBonge, whose district it was; they wore FoLAR's "The Great Cleanup" T-shirts over identical blue oxford shirts and neckties. (LaBonge's own name, listed among the event's sponsors on the back of the T-shirt, was misspelled.)

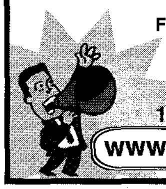
"It's not a Hudson or a Mississippi—it's a different kind of river, a special kind," LaBonge was saying. "If there were no river, the *pobladores*"—the city's first settlers—"would have kept on walking to Santa Monica, and today we'd have a cluster of tall buildings on the coast and look like Miami."

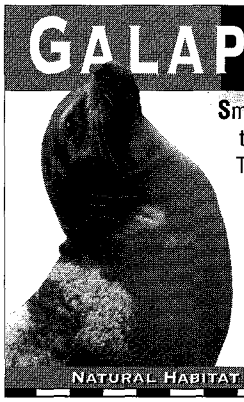
Two girls came up the bank carrying a dead crayfish. One cried, "Rachel found a lobster!" MacAdams watched it all from under his baseball cap, as happy as I'd seen him. "Divine chaos," he said. "To think that I used to worry that we'd run out of trash."

The river deposits between four thousand and ten thousand tons of debris on the beaches of Long Beach every year, and an additional wash of trash floats into the Pacific. FoLAR's cleanup, which skims out thirty tons of trash at most, is thus largely symbolic. But in 1999 the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board, which is affiliated with the California E.P.A., announced that it would issue ninety-two separate water-quality standards for such contaminants as bacteria, metals, and pesticides, and began by issuing a Total Maximum Daily Load standard, or T.M.D.L., for trash. By 2014, the Water Board declared, no trash must enter the river at all.

In 2002, the City of Los Angeles, the county, and a coalition of twenty-two small municipalities filed lawsuits against the Water Board, claiming that complying with the new T.M.D.L.s would be too expensive. Last September, the city and county settled, and announced that they would spend two hundred and sixteen million dollars to clean up half of the trash in the river and in nearby Ballona Creek. Two weeks ago, the coalition won a court ruling that forced the Water Board to withdraw the standards, leaving their future uncertain. "It doesn't make sense to spend the money to make the river that clean," Larry Forester, a leader of the coalition, says. "Why does it have to be cleaned to recreational standards when you get arrested if you try to go recreate on it?"

As the cleanup continued, MacAdams


New and Improved Aeron®
We Will Not Be Undersold!
•All sizes and colors in stock
•1-year money back guarantee
•12-year warranty
Prices starting at just $649
Featuring the New PostureFit™ Option
Full-featured Aerons® starting at $849
1-877-628-LESS
www.ny.sit4less.com


GALAPAGOS
Small ship journeys to the Enchanted Isles. The best experience, the best vessels, the best value ...guaranteed!
For a color catalog of the World's Greatest Nature Expeditions call
1•800•543•8917
www.nathab.com
NATURAL HABITAT ADVENTURES

Just Strings
■ Strings for Musical Instruments
■ Guitar, Bass, Orchestral, Folk & Ethnic
■ World's Largest Selection
www.juststrings.com

St. Barts to St. Tropez
Vacation Villa Rentals
1.800.843.5893
www.Wimco.com
Representing SIBARTH Real Estate in St. Barts

Eldercare Worries?
RN help and advice.
For families with seniors in:
Florida, Houston, Phoenix, San Diego, Los Angeles, and the San Francisco Bay Areas
Call Wisdom River Care Management.
TOLL FREE 1-866-674-9111

FAMILY TRAVEL
- Escorted Tours for all Generations
- Small Groups
- Unique and Unusual Itineraries
Generations TOURING COMPANY
1-888-415-9100 2366 Eastlake Ave #238, Seattle WA 98102
www.generationstouringcompany.com

THE
NEW YORKER
ONLINE

www.newyorker.com

THIS WEEK'S
WEB EXCLUSIVE:

BOB MANKOFF TALKS ABOUT
THE ANNUAL CARTOON-
CAPTION CONTEST AND
THE ART OF THE GAG LINE

PLUS:
Ken Auletta
Malcolm Gladwell
Louis Menand
George Saunders
Deborah Garrison
Peter Hessler
Sylvia Plachy
Rebecca Mead
George Packer
James Surowiecki
Katherine Boo
Jerome Groopman
Judith Thurman
Seymour M. Hersh
William Steig
Larissa MacFarquhar
Joan Acocella
Philip Gourevitch
Jane Mayer
Adam Gopnik
Stanley Kunitz
Jon Lee Anderson
Edna O'Brien
Maira Kalman
and more

AND: A calendar of *New Yorker*
events across the country

joined five third-grade kids who were trying to disentangle a water-logged mattress from a larch tree. Half an hour later, when, finally, eleven people managed to drag the mattress up the bank to a Dumpster, MacAdams gave high-fives all around. "Cleaning up is dealing with the karmic consequences of one's own life, the endlessness of desire," he told me as he returned to the river with a trash bag. "People buy things and throw them away and they end up here. It's a way for me to fulfill the bodhisattva vows, I guess"—a bodhisattva being one who, in Buddhism, chooses not to enter nirvana until others have achieved it. "You volunteer to stay behind and save souls, to clean up. You vow to extinguish all desire and take out the trash."

That night, there was an inch of rain—unheard-of in May and enough, with the city's funnel effect, to raise the river four feet and force postponement of the following morning's cleanup. MacAdams called me at 7 A.M. to complain. "It's an utter mess," he said. "Getting to the river sites is impossible." He chuckled. "I don't know what they're going to do at PAVA's site—the Koreans already marinated the beef."

That afternoon, I drove to MacAdams's house, above the Silver Lake reservoir, where he lives with his wife, Joanne Klabin; their two children; Buddy the cat; and chickens named Little Red and White Girl. He poured me a cup of coffee and said that he was planning to step down as chairman of FoLAR's board to focus on writing a biography of Jann Wenner, the founder of *Rolling Stone.* "Am I just kidding myself to think I can walk away?" he said. He brought up an exchange from a few days earlier, when I asked if he had any political ambitions. He'd said no, that he was a poet. "I smoke pot, my finances are a mess—I could never be a politician," he said. "There's no czar of the river I could be, of course," he added wistfully.

Klabin came into the kitchen and sat, pulling her bare feet up on her chair. I asked her if her husband was different when he wasn't doing work on the river.

"He's never not doing the river," she said. "When I met Lewis, he was talking about FoLAR as a work of art. It took a long time for me to realize that what it was all about was strategizing."

"See, I always thought of that as the same thing," he said.

"I wanted to be with a poet, not a community activist," she said, smiling faintly. "I was pretty romantic at the time." She was calm, as if bitterness had passed, leaving only regret. "If it weren't for the sacrifices we made as a family—I wanted a car that drove and our kids to be clothed—I would feel that his work was totally admirable. Maybe if you're a visionary you shouldn't have a family."

"FoLAR has been the hardest part of our marriage," MacAdams murmured.

Klabin went on, "The greatest tribute to Lewis's accomplishment is that he's not the only person credited with the vision anymore. But, in a city of ten million, that one person can be singled out as the originator of something so large is impressive. And the sacrifices made by our family are not relevant to that."

"They're relevant to me!" MacAdams said.

"When you have a vision, the human element suffers," Klabin said.

The first act of the Los Angeles River movement—rescuing the river from amnesia—has been largely successful. The second act has yet to unfold. The problem, everyone agrees, is how to improve the river with "dual-use" or "multipurpose" projects that increase water quality, habitat, and flood control at the same time. "Los Angeles is the only city in the developed world that's growing at the rate of Mexico City, Nairobi, and Calcutta," Eric Garcetti told me. "So if we can't link the revival of the L.A. River to our long-term need for water—if it's just about greening the river and not about having clean, drinkable water that we retain—we hit a wall."

The Coastal Conservancy, a state agency, has suggested excavating Taylor Yard as a natural flood-control basin. At the moment, however, the future park at Taylor Yard is two separate parcels of scrub and gravel surrounding a still active Union Pacific maintenance yard. Beneath the yard the soil is soaked ten feet deep with solvents and petroleum hydrocarbons, which the Conservancy estimates will cost as much as three hundred and fifty million dollars to clean up. It would take nine basins as large as Taylor Yard to reduce the flow of the river—and, correspondingly, the flood danger—by ten per cent.

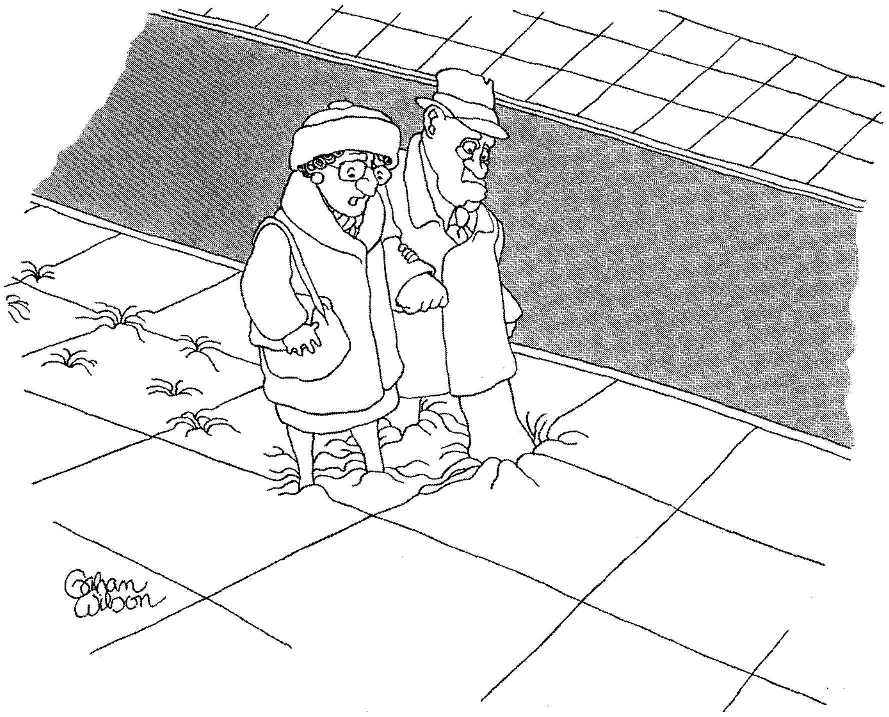
As long as the flood danger remains, so will the concrete. Thus stopgap notions have come to the fore. The artist Lane Barden hopes to inflate a huge rubber dam across the river during the dry months, creating an "unreasonably large seasonal waterway" that could feature a floating beer garden and paddleboats. He thought up the idea two years ago as a conceptual project, but every elected official I spoke with, including Mayor Hahn, seems open to the dam, and Barden now believes there is a sixty-to-eighty-per-cent chance that it will happen. His plans include a landing area for blimps and low-rider parades down the channel in low-flow season. "*More* cars, not less," he says.

"The dam idea could be dual-use, or it could be preposterous," Tom Hayden says. "What's happening now is what comes out of politics. Bureaucracies that see money try to get that money by claiming they'll restore the river through pretty park proposals. So you have a continuing dialogue over downtown among developers, environmentalists, and people who dream of San Antonio"—which has a newly restored riverfront—"where people stroll and have lattes at small tables next to a carefully cemented channel. Nobody except Lewis and me wants to restore a natural river, and if in a few years the available money is seen to have been wasted on pseudo-river projects, to have created one more entertainment-based artifice in Los Angeles, that'll be the end of that idea."

The best means to a true "multipurpose" river would be ripping out the concrete. But you'd have to rip out the surrounding city with it. "To re-create the conditions of original authenticity of the Los Angeles River," Barden points out, "you'd basically have to drop an atomic bomb and wait for two million years."

So MacAdams himself supports Barden's idea, because it at least keeps the idea of the river strongly—if artificially—alive. It's an artistically political compromise.

After listening to his wife talk about the effect of FoLAR on their family, MacAdams and I went for a drive. I asked whether he expected to be better remembered as a poet or as a politician. He laughed and quoted what John Keats wrote as his own epitaph: " 'Here lies a man whose name is writ on water'—that would be more like the truth." ♦



*"Remember when everything used to be so nice and solid?"*

The Toughest Glue On Planet Earth

Gorilla Glue
Incredibly Strong
100% Waterproof
The Toughest Glue On Planet Earth
Bonds Wood, Stone, Metal, Ceramic

**Bonds:**
Wood,
Stone,
Metal,
Ceramic,
& More!

REQUEST YOUR FREE INFORMATION KIT!
www.gorillaglue.com
1-800-966-3458

The Noah James Collection
Doesn't your dog deserve the very best?

Les Poochs
PARIS • LONDON • NEW YORK
(800) 745-1512 Fax: (845) 369-1418
E-mail: sales@lespoochs.com Web: www.lespoochs.com
P.O. Box 51 Tuxedo, NY 10987

NEW YORKER
CARTOON T-SHIRTS
SWEATSHIRTS TOO!
cartoonbank.com
OR CALL 1-800-897-TOON

*for the discriminating vacationer…*
*a commitment to excellence*
Kiawah Island
*Rentals and Sales*
*Pam Harrington Exclusives*
*http://www.kiawahexclusives.com*
*1-800-845-6966*

PUBLISH YOUR BOOK
*At A Price You Can Afford!*
$165 EACH
Size: 5½"x 8½", 96 pgs, 1000 copies, 2-color cvr. All sizes & page counts.
Free Price List. www.profpress.com
800-277-8960 PROFESSIONAL PRESS
P.O. Box 3581 • Chapel Hill, NC 27515-3581

### A REPORTER AT LARGE

# VICTIMS AND VOLUNTEERS

*Amnesty International was shocked when one of its members reported threats on her life. Was she telling the truth?*

BY IAN PARKER

At around eleven o'clock on the night of March 10, 2002, Deputy Sheriff Brian King was driving on Highway 101 near Forks, a remote, rainy town in the northwest corner of Washington, when he noticed a car stopped fifty feet down the Wilson Road turnoff, with its hazard lights flashing and its headlights off. When King pulled up behind the car, a silver 1997 Honda Civic, he saw that its windows were steamed up—perhaps indicating a "young couple engaged in a rendezvous," as the report of a private investigator later put it. There was someone in the driver's seat, but when King tapped the window and called out he got no reply. The car doors were locked. Radioing in the license-plate number, King learned that the car belonged to a Forks resident, Barbara Bocek. He had met Bocek, a woman in her late forties, at the nearby Quileute Indian reservation, where he had once been stationed, and where she had a job writing grant applications for the tribe. He also knew that, in the previous year, Bocek had reported a dozen or so threats against her life that were apparently connected to the volunteer work she had done on political violence in Guatemala for Amnesty International, the world's largest human-rights organization.

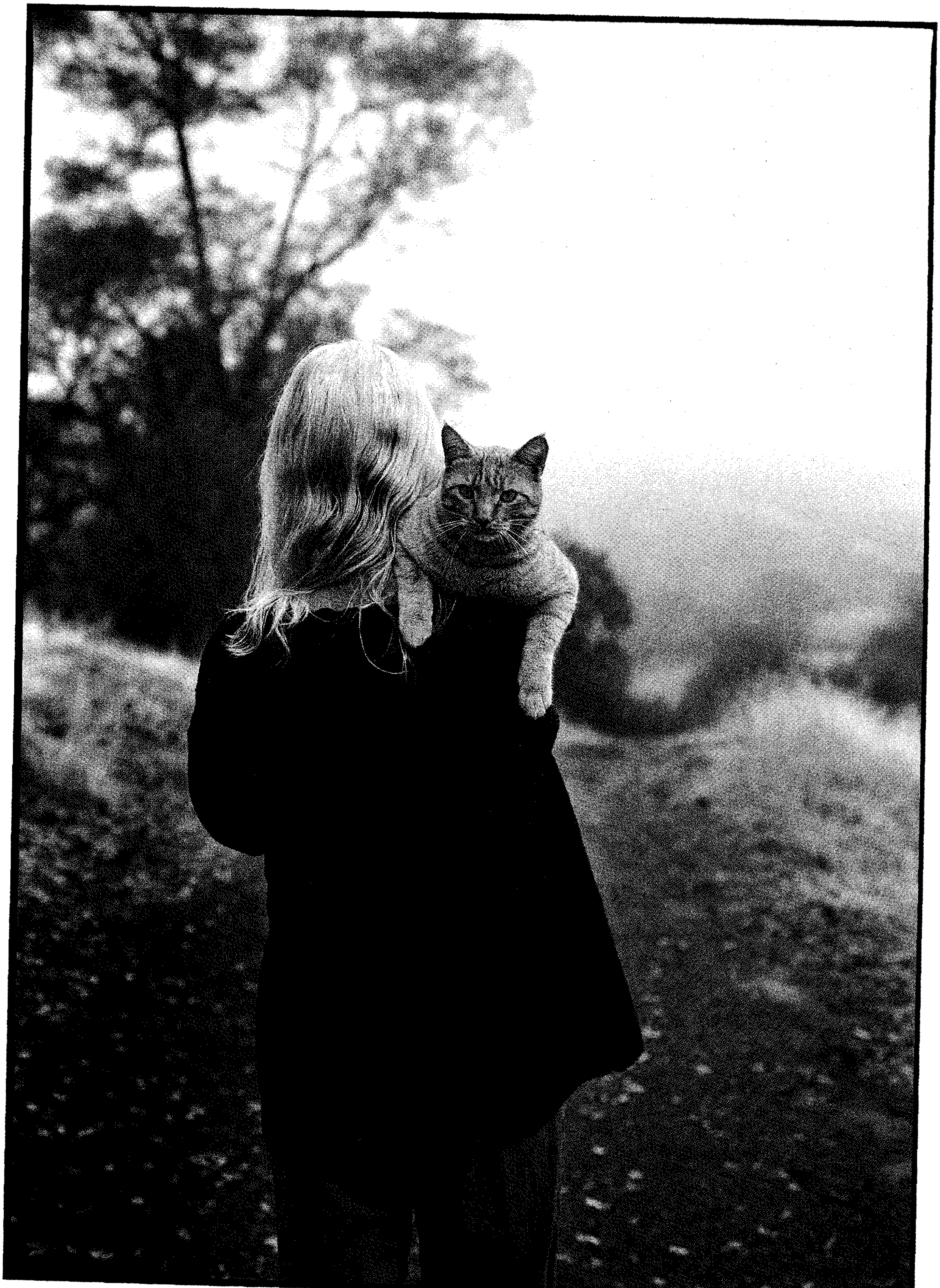
King broke the driver's-side window with his flashlight. Bocek was slumped across the front seats. Black electrical tape had been placed over her mouth and eyes, and was wrapped twice around her legs. Her hands were tied behind her back with wire. As King freed Bocek, she seemed "lethargic and relaxed," he later reported. An ambulance took her to Forks Community Hospital.

Bocek did not immediately describe what had happened, but in the emergency room (where a doctor found no serious physical injuries) the events of the evening began to emerge: Driving home from the reservation a little after seven, Bocek had turned off the highway to check a scraping noise coming from the front of the car. She had knelt to look under the wheel well, and had heard a car pull in behind hers. Frozen with fear, she had not looked up as two men approached, grabbed her, bound and gagged her, and threw her into the car, saying that if she ever returned to Guatemala she would be killed.

King went back to the scene that night, and the next day he presented a report to Randy Pieper, the sole detective in the Clallam County Sheriff's Department who serves the Forks area. Pieper made his own inquiries, and by the end of that week he came to a conclusion that would send Amnesty International into months of turmoil. In Pieper's opinion, Bocek had staged the attack.

Barbara Bocek (whose name is pronounced Boh-check) sometimes describes herself as an "aging hippie." She was born into a Catholic family in Seattle, where her five siblings and her parents still live. She first travelled to Latin America in 1980, when she was a doctoral student in anthropology at Stanford University. She spent five years, on and off, in Peru. "I loved it immediately—I think some people instantly take to the apparent chaos of a developing country's sprawling capital city and others don't," she wrote to me in an e-mail. "I wasn't put off by the black exhaust from buses, the armed guards at banks, the cow heads in market stalls, the pickpockets, the beggars, or the totally lawless traffic." After finishing her degree, in 1986, Bocek stayed on at Stanford as a staff archeologist, overseeing Native American sites on university-owned land, until 1992, when she resigned, partly, according to David Stoll, a friend who knew her from Stanford, because of a personality clash in her department. Bocek was then thirty-eight years old, and she decided to join the Peace Corps. She was sent to a village of two hundred and fifty Maya Indians in Totonicapán, in western Guatemala. Within nine months, she had become fluent in K'iche', the most commonly spoken native language in Guatemala.

David Stoll was also in Guatemala, researching a book about Rigoberta Menchú, the Maya Indian who, after publishing an autobiography that told of her family's brutal treatment during the country's civil war—in which military governments fought left-wing guerrillas and destroyed Maya populations who were said to harbor them—became an inspirational leader for indigenous people and, in 1992, won the Nobel Peace Prize. Stoll's work on a previous book, about the extent of Mayan support for the guerrillas, had led him to question the accuracy of Menchú's narrative. He asked Bocek to travel with him for a week or two at a time as his K'iche' interpreter on interviews, and on these trips Bocek heard witnesses recall, as she says, "acts of brutality that defy description." Stoll remembers that as an interpreter Bocek was "very astute, very skeptical—I would even say cynical, but she did not lose the elementary trust that you need to meet new people." Stoll's controversial book, "Rigoberta Menchú and the Story of All Poor Guatemalans," published in 1999, reported that Menchú's account was, in part, a fabrication. Atrocities of the kind she described had happened, but not all of them were inflicted on her family; she had made herself a "composite Maya." Stoll wrote, "With postmodern critiques of representation and authority, many scholars are tempted to abandon the task of verification, especially when they construe the narrator as a victim worthy of their support. At a time when rumor, myth, representation, and the construction of what we consider 'real' pose fascinating issues, it has become all too easy to deprecate the task of separating truth from falsehood, deferring instead to



*Barbara Bocek, an Amnesty country specialist for Guatemala, now lives in a safe house. Photograph by Ruven Afanador.*

the authority of fashionable forms of victimhood."

Bocek returned to Seattle in 1997, when her father became seriously ill. Preferring not to live in the city, she took the grant-writing position on the Quileute reservation and moved into a two-bedroom duplex in Forks, a town of three thousand people, fifteen miles away. Once a logging center, Forks is "still a Carhart town," as David Johnston, a local psychiatrist, recently put it. "But there's also a socially conscious, intellectual base—a Birkenstock wing." Bocek does not seem to have made many friends in either group, but there is no sign that she wished to. As her friend and Amnesty colleague Angelina Snodgrass Godoy explains, Bocek is a "lone wolf, an independent person."

In 1997, Bocek applied to Amnesty International U.S.A., one of fifty-eight national sections of Amnesty International, which is based in London, to become an unsalaried part-time "country specialist," a sort of senior volunteer, for Guatemala. A.I.U.S.A. now has about a hundred and thirty country specialists. Volunteers submit a formal application, and those who are chosen to become country specialists spend several hours a week providing backup for Amnesty's paid staff, monitoring the local media of their chosen country and serving as links between the staff and the membership.

Amnesty International was founded in 1961 by Peter Benenson, a left-leaning British barrister, who was educated at Eton and at Balliol College, Oxford, and who served in Military Intelligence during the Second World War. After the war, Benenson ran for Parliament unsuccessfully as a Labour candidate. He also converted to Catholicism. With the support of Eric Baker, a prominent Quaker who had helped found the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, and Louis Blom-Cooper, a lawyer, Benenson launched his human-rights campaign with a long article published in the *Observer*. "Open your newspaper any day of the week and you will find a report from somewhere in the world of someone being imprisoned, tortured or executed because his opinions or religion are unacceptable to his government," he wrote. "The newspaper reader feels a sickening sense of impotence. Yet if these feelings of disgust all over the world could be united into common action, something effective could be done." He then announced the establishment of a London office to "collect information about the names, numbers and conditions of what we have decided to call Prisoners of Conscience, and we define them thus: 'Any person who is physically restrained (by imprisonment or otherwise) from expressing (in any form of words or symbols) an opinion which he honestly holds and which does not advocate or condone personal violence.'"

Within a year, the campaign had become a permanent membership organization. It conducted fact-finding "missions," headed by highly respected representatives—one of the first, to Czechoslovakia in 1962, was led by Seán MacBride, the Irish revolutionary and statesman—and invited members to "adopt" prisoners of conscience. Members formed into groups of about ten people, and Amnesty sent each group an ideologically balanced list of three prisoners—one in the Eastern bloc, one in the West, and another in the developing world. Members wrote to their "groups of three" and to the governments who held them with the aim of embarrassing those governments and, ultimately, pressuring them into releasing their prisoners.

Amnesty's members had a clearly defined role, and they could share in the organization's successes. Between 1970 and 1977, when Amnesty won the Nobel Peace Prize, it adopted more than fifteen thousand political prisoners, and helped gain the release of more than half of them. The human-rights scholar William Korey, in his book "NGOs and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: A Curious Grapevine," quotes the Dominican trade-union leader Julio de Peña Valdez describing his experience with Amnesty International after being jailed in 1975: "When the first two hundred letters came, the guards gave me back my clothes. Then the next two hundred letters came and the prison director came to see me. . . . The letters still kept arriving and the President called the prison and told them to let me go. After I was released, the President called me to his office. . . . He said, 'How is it that a trade union leader like you has so many friends all over the world?'" Amnesty has worked on behalf of Václav Havel, Aung San Suu Kyi, Kim Dae-jung, and Agostinho Neto,

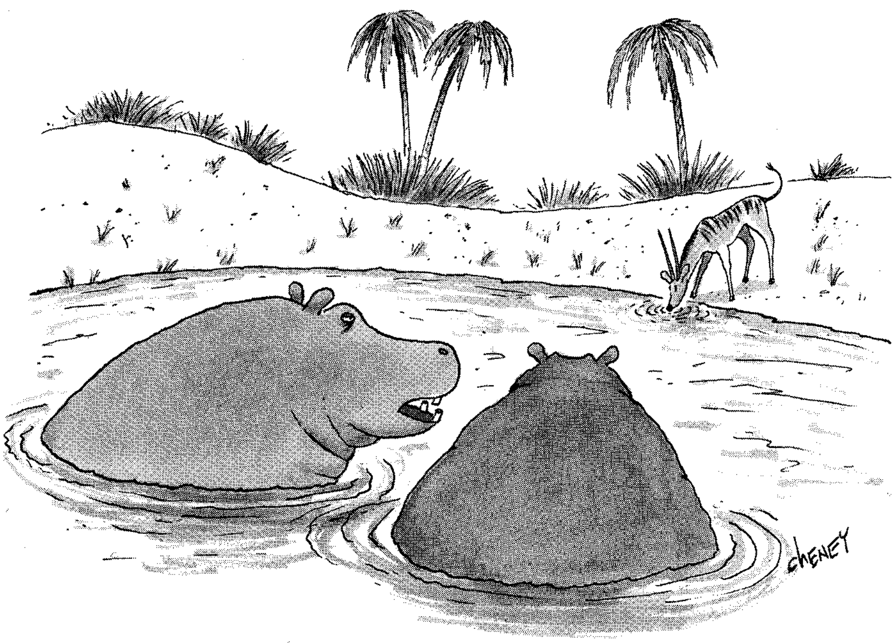
"Wanna see my virtual colonoscopy?"

the first post-independence President of Angola. It estimates that it has helped win the release of more than forty thousand prisoners of conscience.

But the model has evolved over the years. In outline, Amnesty's history is a turn from the particular to the general, from the individual Soviet dissident to broader thematic or geographical campaigns (such as human-rights abuses in the diamond trade, or in Saudi Arabia), which are investigated by human-rights professionals and announced in the media. Amnesty's most significant recent work includes lobbying for the International Criminal Court and against the death penalty worldwide. One can read this development as a response to changes in forms of political cruelty: in the nineteen-seventies, the governments of Argentina and Chile, in particular, turned from incarceration to "disappearances" (perhaps, it has been suggested, to save themselves the inconvenience of an Amnesty campaign); and when the Cold War ended, human-rights abuse became more associated with ethnic conflict and disputed borders (in the Balkans, for example) than with individual prisoners. As Ian Martin, a former Amnesty International secretary-general, said in a speech at Harvard a few years ago, "Amnesty International's brilliantly naïve but effective tactic of deluging offending governments with letters from around the world can have no impact through a government whose formal authority carries no real power over warring bands in its own territory, or on non-governmental groups which are wholly isolated from the international community." In other words, you could hope to embarrass the Franco regime, but not the Taliban.

Yet some members, including Barbara Sproul, an associate professor of religion at Hunter College, who joined A.I.U.S.A. in 1968, are inclined to see Amnesty's evolution more as a matter of choice than as an inevitability. Sproul says that Seán MacBride once told her that some staff members complained that prisoners-of-conscience campaigns were complicated and laborious, and that they thought their time could be more effectively spent on research, press work, and education. Sproul doesn't speak for the membership; in fact, of A.I.U.S.A.'s three hundred and thirty thousand members—many of whom are high-school and university students—she recognizes as true members only the few hundred who are as active as she is. But she represents a vocal activist wing when she asks, "Do campaigns exist for prisoners or prisoners exist for campaigns? Originally, the prisoner was the thing. Now the campaign is the thing, and the prisoner is the illustration."

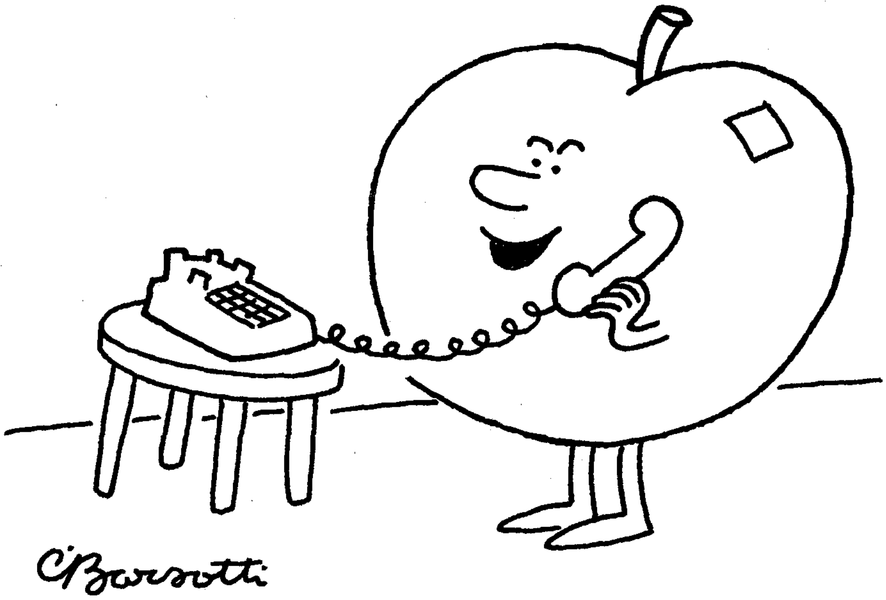
Today, Amnesty International has more than a million members around the world; they pay dues, and they can be invoked, as a constituency, on Capitol Hill or at the United Nations. But, to use a word sometimes heard in Amnesty, the members have to be "serviced": they must be given things to do. An organization like Human Rights Watch—Amnesty's younger and, some say, more agile cousin—has never sought a mass membership; its research and campaigning are done by paid staff and consultants, who are most often lawyers and professionals with advanced degrees in their fields. Over the years, Amnesty has had the task of turning away from a pure member-driven model without turning away from its members. A former A.I.U.S.A. board member puts it this way: "It's much harder to engage successfully in the question of how small-arms sales fuel human-rights abuses in West Africa than it is to write a letter on your kitchen table. The old amateurs feel that they are being squeezed out."



*"I hate her."*

• •

So when Barbara Bocek became a country specialist, she was joining a small but important and somewhat discontented group. (After the Wilson Road incident, a group called the Friends of Barbara Bocek was formed, and its members included many country specialists as well as other veteran activists.) She worked long hours, assuming more responsibility than was usual, particularly after the murder of the Roman Catholic Bishop Juan Gerardi Conedera, who had led a Church investigation into human-rights abuses committed during Guatemala's civil war. Bishop Gerardi was killed on April 26, 1998, two days after he had released a landmark report that held the Guatemalan military responsible for the great majority of the war's two hundred thousand dead. (A United Nations-sponsored truth commission published its own report the following year, confirming the Church's findings and recording the Army's systematic use of torture, "disappearances," and killings it described as genocidal.) Bocek joined an Amnesty mission to Guatemala in 1999; she helped found a "trial observers project" for human-rights cases making hesitant progress



*"Oh, baby, hot caramel? You're going to dip me in hot caramel? I'll be right over."*

• •

through Guatemalan courts; and she helped mobilize members to campaign for justice in the Gerardi case. She also wrote an A.I.U.S.A.-approved op-ed article that was published in the Baltimore *Sun* on April 25, 2001, under the headline "GUATEMALA MUST PROTECT WITNESSES TO ENSURE JUSTICE."

A week later, shortly before she was to return to Guatemala on a second mission, Bocek's phone rang at three in the morning. She says that a man speaking Spanish with a Guatemalan accent told her, "You'll pay for what you've written," adding that she would be tortured and killed along with others working on Gerardi's case. On May 3rd, she received a similar call. In an e-mail memo sent to colleagues at the time, she wrote, "I answered the phone and when he said my name I said something really rude which I won't translate, and then, 'It's you again, what a huge budget you must have for international phone calls.' He said, 'No, Barbara. Why do you say that? We're very nearby to you.'"

Bocek apparently recalls little about the sequence or the timing of the threats made against her. But an internal Amnesty memo shows that nearly three weeks after the second telephone threat she reported that an anonymous fax had been sent to her workplace: a copy of her Baltimore *Sun* article with the words "You'll pay with your life for this" written on it in Spanish. Then, on a ferry to Seattle, she found a page torn from the Forks telephone directory stuffed beside the driver's seat of her car. On the page, her name and address had been scratched out.

Some acts of intimidation in the United States have been attributed to Guatemalan political forces; a private investigator's review of the Bocek case records seven reports of threats between 1994 and 1996 to United States residents who were active in Guatemalan issues. A few were hostile telephone calls, but one involved the fire-bombing of a car belonging to José Pertierra, a lawyer who was representing Jennifer Harbury, the American widow of a Guatemalan rebel leader killed by the Guatemalan Army in 1992. (Pertierra was unharmed.) Nevertheless, the threats against Bocek, who was not a central human-rights figure, were surprising. Amnesty wanted her to pull out of the upcoming mission to Guatemala. She told them she would either go with Amnesty or go on her own. By the time she flew out, on June 4, 2001, A.I.U.S.A. had provided extra security measures and had referred her to a clinical psychologist with expertise in trauma: Judy Okawa, of the Program for Survivors of Torture and Severe Trauma at the Center for Multicultural Human Services, in Falls Church, Virginia. William F. Schulz, the executive director of A.I.U.S.A., had written to the F.B.I. to press them to take the threats against Bocek seriously, and a local F.B.I. agent, Stephanie Gleason, had been assigned to her case.

In Guatemala City, Bocek joined Tracy Ulltveit-Moe, a staff researcher from London, and Francisco Soberón, a leading Peruvian human-rights campaigner. They arrived at a moment of high tension and increasing political violence; in the preceding twelve months, there had been a hundred and seventy-one documented cases of harassment and targeted violence against human-rights advocates in Guatemala. On June 8th, the trial of three military officers and a priest who had been charged in the murder of Bishop Gerardi came to an end, with guilty verdicts returned against them. In the Westin Camino Real, the upscale hotel where the Amnesty members were staying, Bocek and her colleagues drafted a dozen or so letters in support of the convictions to the editors of American newspapers and e-mailed them to A.I.U.S.A. for approval and distribution. Although the trial was widely reported, Bocek suspects that these letters were a serious provocation. "We were raising hell!" she says.

On the night of June 11th, Bocek says, when she returned to the hotel at about ten o'clock to make a telephone call, she was confronted in the hall outside her room by two men, who attempted to abduct her. She told me, "Before I could get in my room, these two guys stepped out of the stairwell." She added, apologetically, "I can't talk about it right now." At twelve-thirty, according to Amnesty's records, she was found at the foot of the stairwell, her legs and arms bound, and her mouth covered with tape. She appeared sluggish, but a medical examination found no serious physical injuries or evidence of drugging.

Bocek has never offered a physical description of her attackers. Nor does she know why her abduction was aborted. She told Amnesty that the men spoke of "returning with a van." (One Amnesty document suggests that the men decided not to use the door at the bottom of the stairwell, because it would have triggered an alarm.) She also says that she was able to throw her electronic key into her room and slam the door to prevent the men from taking her inside. She told me that one of the men had a gun, and that one told her, in Spanish, "We're going to take you away from here and no one is ever going to see you again."

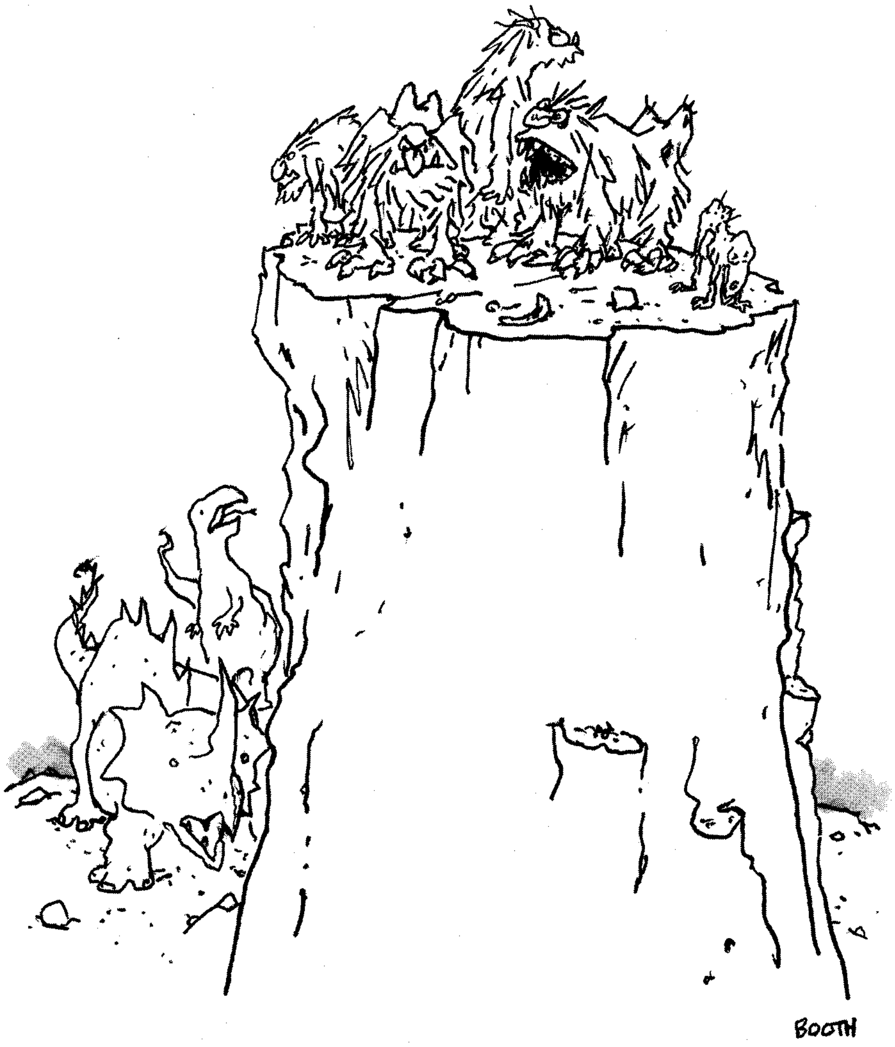
Amnesty was horrified: no member of a mission had ever been subjected to this kind of violence. Staff members at the American Embassy in Guatemala City interviewed Bocek, and they helped transfer her to another hotel, where Embassy guards were posted at her door. After some urging from Amnesty, Bocek met with officials of the Guatemalan Public Ministry and made a statement. When she left the country the next day, the Embassy supplied an armed escort to the airport and onto the plane. ("Like being a rock star," she recalled.) She flew home via Washington, D.C., where she saw her therapist, Judy Okawa, and had lunch with the American Ambassador to Guatemala, Prudence Bushnell. Shortly after the attack, the Guatemalan interior minister, Byron Barrientos, told a newspaper reporter that he thought it was a hoax, but Bushnell had promised to raise Bocek's case with the Guatemalan authorities.

According to Bocek, the threats continued after she returned to Forks. On the telephone, a man speaking in Guatemalan-accented Spanish said, "We know you're back." She found a threatening note on her bedroom window, and she says a rock with another note wrapped around it was thrown at the windshield of her car while it was parked in her garage. In August, the F.B.I. urged her to move, but she refused. Amnesty pressed her to allow them to install house and car alarms as well as video cameras. Bocek threatened to leave the organization if the cameras were installed. "I didn't like cameras—it's nobody's fucking business who comes to my house," she told me. An Amnesty colleague remembers the arguments: "They were saying, 'You have to take this seriously,' but she didn't want any change in her routine." In the end, the cameras were installed, and Bocek retreated further into isolation. She told me, "You don't want to visit anybody. I was so glad I didn't have a partner then. I thought, God, what if I had a roommate or boyfriend? They would be going through this."

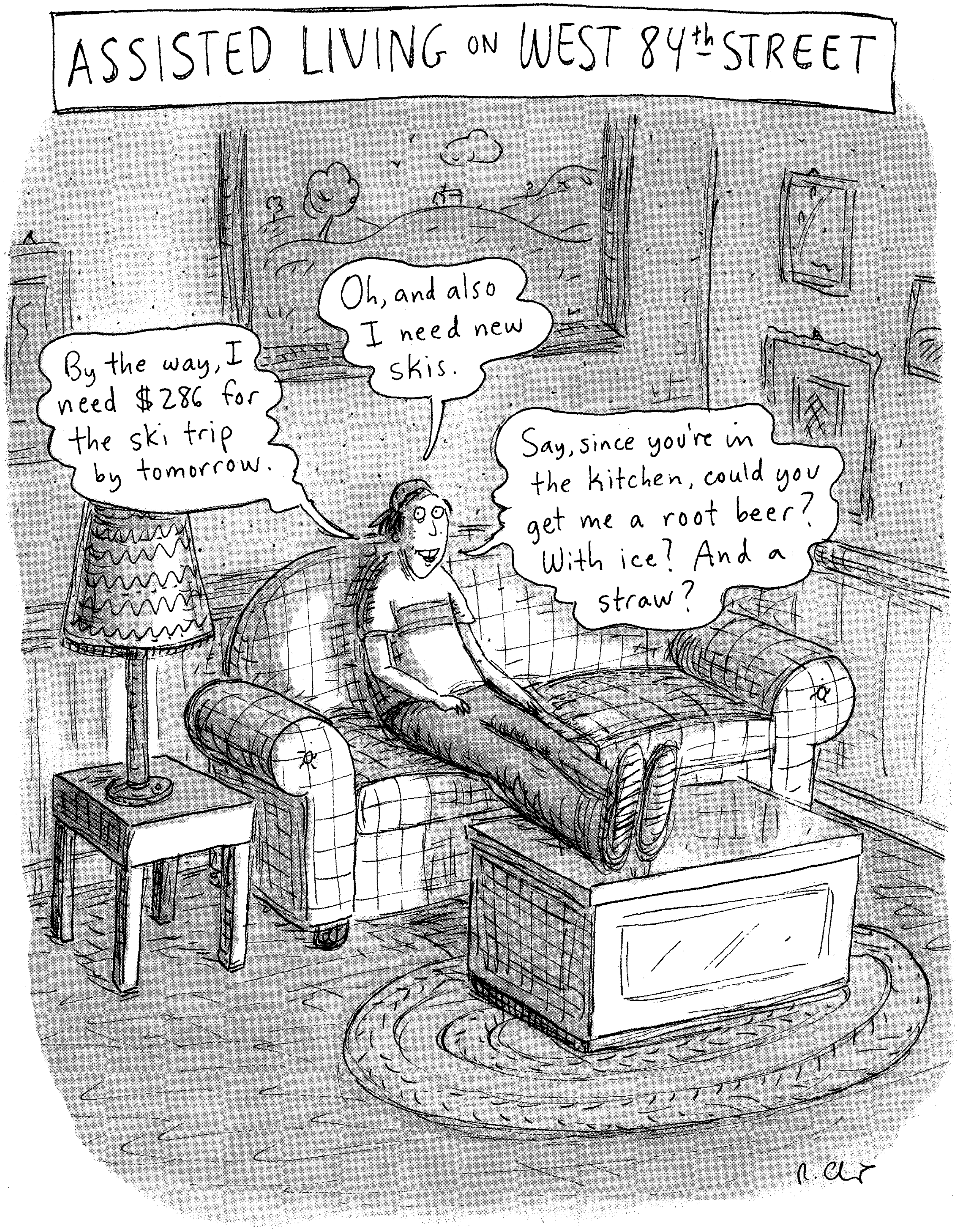
During this time, Bocek was in regular contact with Stephanie Gleason, the F.B.I. agent, whom she found sympathetic. In September, she told Gleason that she found a note in which someone threatened to poison her cat. Later that month, a man approached her outside a grocery store in Forks, saying, "I noticed your car. I've been looking for a car like yours." When she returned to the Honda, she found a note on the windshield which read, "We want you to realize that we're watching you." (Bocek says that she does not have copies of the notes and that some of the originals are with the F.B.I.)

With Bocek's approval, Amnesty stepped up its public response to the threats, and in early October she went to Washington, D.C., for meetings at the State Department and with the Guatemalan Ambassador. She stayed a week. Amnesty asked her to check in with the local police when she got back to Forks. Instead, she drove directly to her apartment. There, she says, she found a knife stuck into a screen on one of her windows.

An Amnesty "urgent action" describes a proven or likely life-threatening human-rights abuse, and it is sent to members with a request that they write in protest to the government in question. Urgent actions are verified in London, and are traditionally supported by at least two reliable sources. At first, Bocek had not wanted this kind of attention drawn to her case, but in October a "special action" (a variant of the urgent action, authorized at the national level) was issued by A.I.U.S.A. Bocek helped draft it, and it did not draw on any corroborating evidence. "Amnesty International is deeply concerned for the safety of U.S. citizen Barbara Bocek, who has received repeated death threats in the United States and was the victim of an attempted abduction in Gua-



"Remember—anything said on this butte stays on this butte!"


ASSISTED LIVING ON WEST 84th STREET
By the way, I need $286 for the ski trip by tomorrow.
Oh, and also I need new skis.
Say, since you're in the kitchen, could you get me a root beer? With ice? And a straw?

temala on June 11," it read. It described the threats against Bocek up to the incident of the knife in the window screen. It urged members to write to the Guatemalan Ambassador about Bocek's case, and more than a thousand did.

But the special action was out of date almost as soon as it was released. As an Amnesty staff member explained it to me, after Bocek found the knife she decided to sleep in her living room for a couple of nights. When she eventually went into the bedroom, Bocek later said, she found another knife, under her pillow. She did not report this directly to Amnesty or the F.B.I.; rather, Amnesty learned of it from Judy Okawa. There was no evidence of a break-in. The alarm did not go off. The video cameras were in place. Bocek now says that the tapes all went to the F.B.I., and that "for all I know they caught someone on the tape but didn't want to talk about it." She speculates that if there was no sign of forced entry, perhaps there were keys to her apartment in circulation, from previous tenants. The company that installed the alarm told Bocek that it was extremely hard but "not impossible" to disable the system after breaking in.

By that stage, Bocek told me, "I was mentally a mess." Colleagues at the reservation were telling her that she looked ill. Her doctor recommended that she take anti-anxiety medication. She left Forks for a few weeks, and spent some of that time in Virginia, where she consulted Okawa.

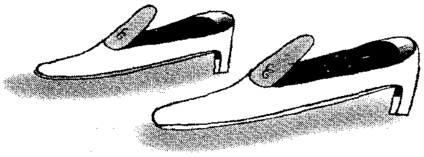
The A.I.U.S.A. leadership was by now beginning to feel pressure about the Bocek case from two sources. First, the International Secretariat (I.S.), Amnesty's governing body in London, apparently indicated that it had some worries about Bocek's veracity. I was told that A.I.U.S.A. staff heard that a staff member in London had questioned Bocek's account of events in the Camino Real. They also learned that an I.S. security report on the mission raised some doubts about Bocek's story. In an effort to reassure the London office, A.I.U.S.A. agreed to ask Okawa to produce a report on her client. "In my professional opinion, Ms. Bocek is not malingering," she wrote. (Okawa declined to talk to me about the case, citing therapist-client confidentiality.)

It also appeared that, following the incident of the knives, the F.B.I. was beginning to regard the Bocek case with suspicion. Charles Brown, then A.I.U.S.A.'s deputy executive director, met with the F.B.I. in Washington, D.C., in November, and was told that Bocek was not coöperating. So when the bureau asked her to meet with agents early in the new year, A.I.U.S.A. welcomed this as an opportunity to "get everyone back on board, to sort it out," as one staff member told me. On January 3, 2002, in the F.B.I.'s offices outside Seattle, Bocek was interviewed by Stephanie Gleason and an agent she had not met before, Ray Lauer.

At the meeting, Bocek says, the agents immediately accused her of lying. Infuriated, she decided to tell "a big whopping lie." She informed Lauer that she had made up the story of the knives. She says, "I honestly thought he would say, 'No false confessions!' Instead, he got all excited and turned his chair around facing me, and said, 'Now we're getting somewhere.'"

Bocek agreed to a lie-detector test, which she failed (although she claims that the process was flawed). After about five hours, she left. She said, "It was, 'I'm out of here,' and he said, 'There's nothing more important than you staying here right now and answering our questions.' 'Fuck that. I've got a ferry to catch.' And I just left. . . . I called them the next day. I said, 'Fuck you all forever. If you think that after that I'll ever talk to you again, you're crazy, you're clearly nuts, completely out there.' He said, 'Lying to the F.B.I. is a federal offense and we can prosecute.'" Although the F.B.I. declined to comment specifically on the case, Ray Lauer told me, "We took the initial complaints very seriously and we did the things we needed to do, and at this point no further investigation is being conducted."

Bocek had been due to fly to Guatemala on March 12th, to look at police mug shots of men who might have been her assailants at the Camino Real. Her colleagues were alarmed that she was going. One of them said, "I don't want to be the person who has to call her family." There is a risk, according to Jack Saul, the director of the International Trauma Studies Program at N.Y.U., that human-rights workers will mask their trepidations, "fearing that if they reveal their vulnerability they'll be considered not fit to do that work. There's an assumption you've got to be tough." But although Bocek acknowledges that she was afraid to go back, she says, "If I'd not wanted to go I could have just not gone."

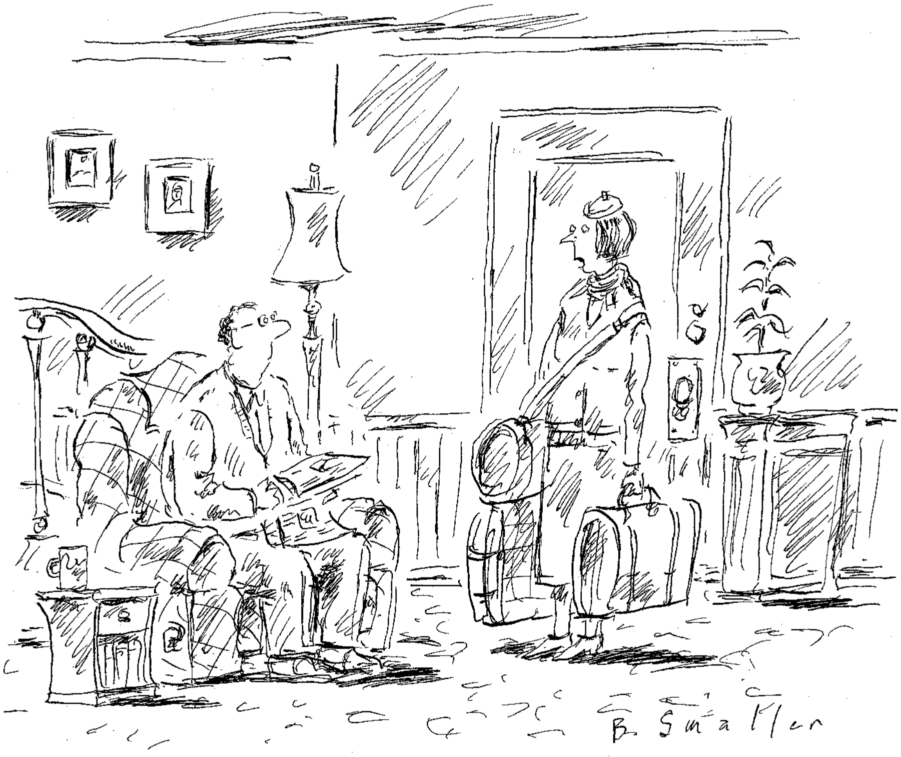


On March 10th, two days before she was scheduled to leave, Deputy Sheriff King found her in her car on Wilson Road. Although the doctor who examined Bocek in Forks reported that she had "no specific complaints" besides a general soreness from sitting still for so long, she claimed soon after that she had broken a molar and suffered nerve damage to her hands and her left arm. At A.I.U.S.A.'s annual meeting a few weeks later in Seattle, she wore her arm in a sling. William Schulz addressed Bocek's case in his introductory remarks. "We will not tolerate threats against our human-rights defenders," he said, and a second special action, approved by Bocek, which noted her injuries, was handed out as he spoke.

The incident at the Camino Real had gained mention in the American press, but the Wilson Road incident was allegedly an act of political violence committed in the United States, and the media began to give it serious attention. The Forks police did not inform Amnesty of its findings, but two reporters—David Gonzalez, of the New York *Times,* and Mike Carter, of the Seattle *Times*—quickly discovered that Detective Randy Pieper doubted Bocek's story. The Seattle *Times* ran its article on May 4th under the headline "WOMAN SAYS GUATEMALANS ATTACKED HER NEAR FORKS; DETECTIVE SAYS, 'WE DON'T THINK IT HAPPENED.'" The New York *Times* story appeared two days later: "POLICE DOUBTS ABOUT ATTACK CAST CLOUD ON RIGHTS GROUP." That same day, the senior staff of A.I.U.S.A., including William Schulz and Charles Brown, had a conference call with their I.S. counterparts in London. By the end of that conversation, it had been decided that Amnesty should hire a private investigator to examine the Wilson Road attack, and ask Bocek to take a leave of absence until a report was made. In a letter published in the New York *Times*, Brown noted that the police had not shared their doubts, and added, "The Bocek case appears consistent with a pattern of intimidation common to the Guatemalan military and its associates. We will continue our own inquiry into the case."

Some A.I.U.S.A. members were angered by Bocek's suspension. Among them was the longtime activist Barbara Sproul, who wrote regular e-mails to the board, the staff, and the network of country specialists. She said, "I saw someone being trashed. Normally we take the word of a person, on the basis of his track record, and what the likelihood is that such a thing happened. Suddenly the F.B.I. raises questions, and the local police chief follows suit, and we just roll over and play dead? I come from the seventies, when our offices would be broken into and the Chile files would go missing." In recognition of the feelings of members like Sproul, A.I.U.S.A. released a statement to members in July that appeared to put some distance between itself and the I.S. A.I.U.S.A., it said, was "fully committed to Barb and to the truth of her claims." It added, "Even if the results of the investigation are inconclusive, it will be A.I.U.S.A.'s position that the organization must remain steadfast in support of Barb and her veracity, preferring to err—if we err at all—on the side of the victim, a long standing principle of the human rights movement."

Amnesty's chosen investigator was Keith Rohman, of the Los Angeles firm Public Interest Investigations. Rohman, who has extensive human-rights and civil-rights credentials (he served as an international monitor for the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission), worked on the case throughout the summer of 2002. He started with "a profound respect for the work of Ms. Bocek," as he wrote in a statement which he sent to me, after declining to be interviewed for this article. He questioned Bocek twice (once in the presence of Judy Okawa, once with her lawyer); he talked to the police; he considered what he called "the Guatemalan connection." He compiled a sixty-page report, which he delivered to Amnesty International's lawyers in October. At Bocek's request, the report was circulated narrowly within the organization. Those at Amnesty who saw the report signed confidentiality agreements, and Bocek was asked to do the same. She had not done so by the end of January, 2003, when she was sent a copy of the report anonymously.

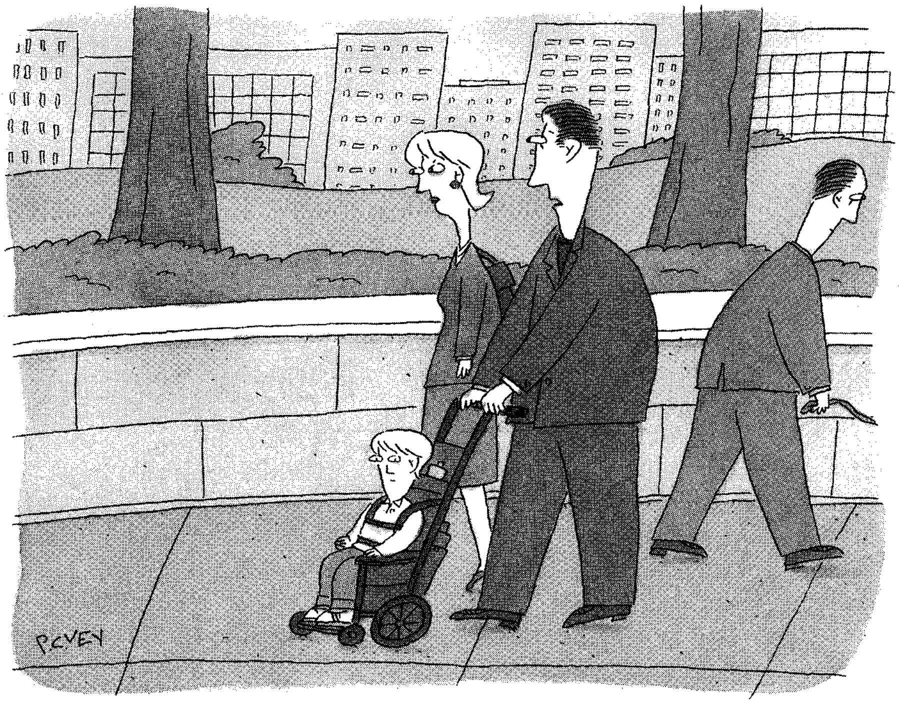


*"This is goodbye—there are one thousand eight hundred and twenty-five meals for you in the freezer."*

Today, Bocek is living in a safe house. After we had exchanged e-mails, and spoken on the telephone, she said she would see me, disregarding the wishes of A.I.U.S.A., which has declined to make anyone available for an interview about this case. Early one morning, I drove to a roadside diner an hour or so from a midsized airport in a part of the country that she asked me not to name. Behind a screen door, beneath a row of photographs of James Dean, a family was eating pancakes. Bocek walked in a moment after me: a tall, slim, suntanned woman whose hair—blond turning gray—was pulled back into a ponytail. She wore denim shorts and a tie-dyed sleeveless T-shirt.

We took a booth by the window, and she sat with her hands in her lap. She rarely looked up, and tended to keep her eyes shut while talking. When I asked how she was, she wept. "I'm thinking of moving away quite soon," she said. "Too many people know I'm here." She sometimes spoke strongly, but often her voice dropped to a whisper; Bocek freely describes the events surrounding the threats against her but told me that although she has discussed the Wilson Road attack at length with Okawa and with "some of my friends who are also survivors," she has been unable to tell anyone the full story. In the diner, she said that she supposed our waitress knew her from previous visits; she found even this level of familiarity unnerving. Bocek rarely uses A.T.M.s or credit cards, and if a car has been behind her even a short while and then turns when she turns into, say, a parking lot, she will not stop her car until she is sure she isn't being followed.

Bocek did not want to go to the safe house, so after we finished our coffee she drove us up a narrowing country road to a big ranch house belonging to friends of friends, where she helped out in the garden once a week. We spoke on a poolside patio; now and then she would stop to talk softly to the household cats. In the middle of the afternoon, she agreed to let me read her copy of the private investigator's report.



*"I'm not against having more children—I'd just like to finish with this one first."*

The document respectfully concludes that Bocek's story is unreliable. Rohman writes, "Within the context of the Guatemalan situation, the Wilson Road attack appears plausible in its general outlines. Ms. Bocek is described as a woman of integrity, competence and intelligence by individuals whom we interviewed. Nonetheless, in our opinion, the specific evidence from the crime scene that challenges her account seems strong, while the evidence that supports her account seems weak." In the margin of her copy, Bocek has written, "And that's the big conclusion." There are annotations throughout—next to a reference to F.B.I. agent Ray Lauer she has written, "He could no more tell a truth from a lie than find his ass with both hands."

Rohman was careful to include the evidence that Bocek felt corroborated her story. A fragment of white latex was found stuck to the tape on her mouth, a scrap that could not be explained by anything worn by Bocek, Deputy Sheriff Brian King, or the paramedics. ("Sometimes all there is is one little thing," Bocek told me.) But most of the material in the report discounted Bocek's version. Rohman interviewed King, who told him that when he found Bocek the wire around her hands was in "a kind of funky figure-eight. . . . You could have gotten it off your hands easily with some wristy-twisty articulation." Rohman reported that Bocek's hands showed no sign of bruising; that, besides a wet left knee on her pants leg, her clothes showed no signs of rain or mud, even though seven and a half inches of rain and snow had fallen in the previous five days; and that her hair was neat. (Bocek wrote in the margin, "The first thing I did when I could lift my hands was smooth my hair. I'm a girl.") The electrical tape over her mouth, Rohman wrote, which had been cut into strips and formed a kind of mask, did not look like something hurriedly fixed "over the mouth of a resisting victim kneeling on the ground in the dark." And when King searched the car the next day he found a roll of electrical tape between the passenger seat and the center console.

Rohman himself conducted what he called "an informal forensic test," in which he wrapped electrical tape three times around the legs of three women of approximately Bocek's size. "Each woman was able to free herself in less than 30 seconds by pulling her legs apart and stretching the tape," he wrote. There also appeared to be no explanation why Bocek hadn't just pulled over into one of two lay-bys on the highway, rather than driving down Wilson Road, or why both car doors were locked.

Rohman phrased his written conclusion carefully, but later he was more forthright. He told an A.I.U.S.A. board meeting in October that a jury considering a charge against Bocek of filing a false police report would probably vote to convict. In his statement to me, he stood by the report, and described it as containing "significant evidence challenging Ms. Bocek's account."

An executive committee made up of A.I.U.S.A. staff members and some members of the board of directors looked at the report first; it was then considered by the full board, which released its response three months later. The eighteen board members—who are elected by the general membership and have responsibility for such tasks as appointing the executive director—included both grassroots activists and human-rights professionals. In the former group were an epidemiologist, a teacher, and a woman who worked for an Oregon church group. In the latter were lawyers, a humanitarian-aid professional, and the director of an agency for torture survivors. Their deliberations involved long, wearying late-night conference calls and arguments about, for example, the meaning of the word "inconclusive." Rosa Ehrenreich Brooks, a professor of law who has worked on Human Rights Watch missions in Uganda, Kenya, and Jamaica, and who joined the board in July of 2002, told me, "It was unbelievably fraught." Linda Hartke, a soft-spoken woman who works for an international Christian-oriented organization based in Geneva, and who was then the board chair, acknowledged to me that it was "painful."

Finally, on January 12th, the board released a statement. In a vote of thirteen to five, it affirmed "that Barbara Bocek is held in the highest regard as a woman of integrity and one of our most effective country specialists." It continued, "We believe it would not be fruitful to press the authorities for further review of this matter and have decided to take no further campaigning action on Barbara Bocek's case at this time." In Rosa

Brooks's view, the statement was a "document of dysfunction."

To a group of key Amnesty grassroots members it marked the abandonment of a fellow-activist on the word of a rural police officer, a private eye, and a couple of newspaper reporters. Several dozen members began mobilizing through a Yahoo e-mail group, the Friends of Barbara Bocek, and at Amnesty-D, an online meeting place. The chief argument heard, besides that Bocek was being held to a higher standard than other human-rights victims, was that the board's delay in responding indicated a dispute over the report, which, in turn, suggested that the report was not conclusive, and, in that eventuality, Bocek had been promised the benefit of the doubt. The Friends made louder and angrier calls for action, and Amnesty-D became a place of rebellion: "The members of the Executive Director's Leadership Council are listed in the corporate annual report," one message reported, referring to the list of high-profile donors who in 2001 included Danny Glover and Patrick Stewart. "Who has a copy so we can start looking for phone numbers and e-mails?" An old-fashioned Amnesty campaign was emerging, this time directed against A.I.U.S.A.'s own leadership. Barbara Sproul claimed, "Amnesty had done something wrong and we could fix it, and save ourselves, as an organization—save our soul."

Solidarity has always been part of Amnesty's work, but the organization's responsibility to monitor and verify claims of human-rights violations is investigative, and while a sense of compassion is inherent in that work, the verification process itself can be blunt. According to Rosa Brooks, "You ask, 'Tell me about the time your children were hacked to death in front of you.' And, if the story doesn't make sense, you keep asking probing, obnoxious questions and then you say, 'Thank you and goodbye.'" That was the way that Bocek and David Stoll had interviewed Guatemalans about their experiences during the civil war, yet Bocek and her supporters were resisting, and resenting, that process in her own case. Judy Okawa wrote to the A.I.U.S.A. board describing Bocek's symptoms of trauma, and said that to question her risked retraumatizing her; Bocek's account of events, even if incomplete and uncorroborated, had to stand.

Jack Saul, of N.Y.U., says, "Sometimes, people can only talk about traumatic experiences if they feel ready, safe, and secure, or if there is a compelling reason, like getting political asylum." Yet, according to Malcolm Smart, the director of the Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture, in London, which has one of the world's largest archives of torture testimony, most victims respond well to questioning. He said, "Our experience is that people are relieved that somebody is interested." Victoria Sanford, a Guatemala scholar and a senior research fellow at the Institute on Violence and Survival at the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities, who has collected testimony from five hundred massacre survivors, said, "I've never had anyone say, 'I don't want to talk about that—it's too painful.' That isn't the framework." Sanford sees the Bocek case as "a rerun of David Stoll's Rigoberta book." For some people, Bocek's story, like Rigoberta Menchú's, was becoming a kind of sacred truth.

During a weekend in late January of 2003, A.I.U.S.A. held a quarterly board meeting in Washington, D.C. Such meetings are, for the most part, open to the public, which enabled Bocek to attend, along with several of her supporters. Among them were Judy Okawa and Sister Dianna Ortiz, an American citizen who was tortured in Guatemala in 1989, and who now runs a charity for survivors of torture—which is the term she uses to describe Bocek.

In a prepared statement, Bocek described the fears and anxieties that she said still afflicted her. She said, "You the board of A.I.U.S.A. have tried repeatedly to silence me. You have subjected me to the pain of denial and disbelief experienced by many of the people on whose behalf I have advocated. This irony has not been lost on the torture-treatment professionals working with me nor on other Guatemalan or human-rights specialists. If A.I. insisted that other victims of threats and assaults meet the standards demanded of me—that to be supported they must prove they did not fabricate the incidents themselves—A.I.'s work in Guatemala and elsewhere would grind to a halt."

She then challenged the board to share any doubts it had about the Wilson Road attack. Rosa Brooks reminded her of Amnesty's confidentiality agreement, then asked Bocek if she would object to having the report made generally available to members. Bocek answered angrily that it would be painful to have such personal information shared with so many others. After a number of board members expressed their regret for Bocek's suffering, Linda Hartke, the chair, thanked her for coming and for her courage in speaking to them. Bocek replied, "I don't need your admiration and concern. I need you to believe me."

Bocek's supporters saw the Washington meeting as a turning point, and the number of irate phone calls and e-mails to the board increased. At times, the board's pro-Bocek wing, led by Diego Zavala, a researcher at the Ponce School of Medicine, in Puerto Rico, was barely speaking to the skeptic wing, which included Hartke, Brooks, and Ruth Barrett Rendler, the deputy director of the Center for Victims of Torture, a counselling facility in Minneapolis. In early February, a young man approached Rendler at her office, "saying he was involved in work to change the position of the A.I.U.S.A. board on a certain matter," as she later wrote to her colleagues. "He explained that if the A.I.U.S.A. board did not change its position, he would contact clients of the Center and tell them that 'they shouldn't count on being believed or assisted' by the Center." Rendler announced her resignation from the board the following week. The man was never identified, and Bocek's supporters have denied any association with him.

On February 12th, the demands of the Friends of Barbara Bocek were laid out for the board in a letter signed by Barbara Sproul; Govind Acharya, the chair of the country-specialist steering committee; and about forty others. The letter proposed a six-point "internal solution." First, it called for pro-Bocek advertisements, approved by Bocek, to be placed in the two newspapers that had questioned her story. Second, it requested that Hartke resign from the board. In four further points, the board was asked to consider the roles of Charles Brown and William Schulz (who was in frequent discussions with the board) in the Bocek affair, to appoint a "Lessons Learned Task Force" (whose report is expected to be released shortly), and to respond to questions already posed by a committee of country specialists. "This proposal for an internal solution calls for specific action on or before March 10, 2003. If the Board has not implemented this solution by March 11, 2003, this proposal shall be considered 'off the table.'" The letter carried the threat of a vote of no confidence at the A.I.U.S.A. annual general meeting in April.

In the months after Rohman's report was submitted, it became apparent that the board was made up of three groups: there were those who accepted Bocek's version of events, those who thought that the report raised significant doubts about her version, and a third group that had voted with the doubters to pass the January statement and now floated the other way, apparently driven less by conviction than by the desire to bring the activists back into the fold.

Between February 16th and February 24th, the board passed all the demands, except the request for Hartke's removal from the board. Brooks resigned soon after. Hartke decided to resign the chair but remained on the board. Other board members considered leaving but were persuaded not to. On March 10th, the first anniversary of the Wilson Road incident, an advertisement appeared on page A7 of the *Times*, under the heading "Amnesty International USA Supports Human Rights Activist Barbara Bocek and Others Fighting for Justice in Guatemala."

Barbara Bocek was vindicated, but the events "ended my life as I knew it," she told me. She still consults with Judy Okawa, and for a while she saw a local therapist, although, she says, "a therapist can know about trauma and chronic anxiety disorder, but it's not the same as people who have dealt with a lot of survivors of political violence." Amnesty provides her with financial support—according to an informal internal estimate, by the start of last year it had spent thirty thousand dollars on Bocek's living and health expenses and on security. Since then, there have been further costs, and a contribution toward her tuition payments. (Bocek is currently enrolled in the University of Connecticut's online master's program in humanitarian services.) She has been reinstated as a Guatemala country specialist, and contributes to the extent that she can. "It's very hard for me to respond to information about threats," she told me. Last year, she helped prepare materials about the torture methods employed by Guatemala's Military Intelligence Unit, but she could not watch the resulting online flash-movie that, by e-mail, she urged other Amnesty members to view.

Although the Bocek case diverted A.I.U.S.A.'s attention away from other issues related to Guatemala, Amnesty's work around the world has continued unaffected. (For example, the organization helped secure the release of six reform activists in Malaysia, a Mexican general imprisoned for criticizing Army abuses, and the Guinean opposition leader Alpha Conde.) In a brief statement that was the organization's only official response to questions about the case, Morton Winston, then the A.I. honorary chair, wrote, "At no time did this internal matter detract from A.I.U.S.A.'s human-rights campaigning or its financial and organizational strength." But the tensions underlying the case remain. Kathy Bachman, an A.I.U.S.A. board member who supported Bocek, is now the chair, and the Bocek case has helped galvanize a group called Internal Reform Now!, six of whose members are standing for election to the board on a platform that includes support for A.I.U.S.A. "as a grassroots organization that shares leadership between staff and volunteers."

A.I.U.S.A.'s most recent annual general meeting opened on Friday, April 4, 2003, at the Omni William Penn Hotel, in Pittsburgh. The theme was "Imagine," following Yoko Ono's gift to Amnesty of the rights to use John Lennon's song of that title for a two-year campaign. On Sunday, in a red-and-gold ballroom on the seventeenth floor of the hotel, about five hundred members met to vote on questions of governance, membership, and Amnesty's future program. After a number of resolutions, they came to one that began, "A.I.U.S.A. applauds Barbara Bocek for her extraordinary and heroic dedication to human rights and extends to her our deepest gratitude." There were no questions or amendments. The chairman called a vote: half a dozen or so voted against, and there were perhaps the same number of abstentions. Everyone else voted in favor, and for the only time that session the members whooped and applauded. ♦

*"I've stopped looking for work, which, I believe, helps the economic numbers."*

THE SPORTING SCENE

# TWIN PEAKS

*Hermann Maier came back after a near-fatal crash; Bode Miller was waiting.*

BY BURKHARD BILGER

Wherever Hermann Maier goes, a small oompah band seems to follow. Most of the time, it is a ragged little outfit: a bass drum and a tuba, perhaps, with a clarinet tweedling beside them. But sometimes, on the occasion of great victories—Maier may be the best Alpine skier of his generation, and is one of the most beloved figures in Austria—his fans pull together a full brass band. Last February, in his home town of Flachau, in the high Alps south of Salzburg, the chalets were hung with banners of pigs on skis (Maier's lucky symbol, the "Glück Schwein"). A small stage had been erected in the town square, and the *Bürgermeister* and a silver-haired m.c. were taking turns paying tribute. Though an Arctic wind whistled down from the surrounding peaks, the band was scantily clad in lederhosen and knee-socks, with boiled-wool jackets and eagle feathers in their hats. Their director, Rupert Weitgasse, had even written a special tune for the occasion: "The Hermann Maier March."

"*Aber schnell jetzt!*" a woman beside me mumbled, hopping up and down and clutching herself to keep warm. But there was no hurrying this ceremony. In

*"I am more ski-instructor style," said Maier (left,*

SPYDER
SPYDER
SALT LAKE 2002
15
usa
2002
FISCHER

*he Austrian champion who has won the World Cup three times; Miller, he said, "is more Texas style—wild."*

OPPOSITE: DPPI/ICON SPORTS MEDIA; ZOOM/GETTY IMAGES

*"We had a huge fight on our first date, too."*

• •

the previous few weeks, the people of Flachau had witnessed a kind of Second Coming: Maier's miraculous return, after a near-fatal motorcycle accident, to a sport that in Austria is almost a religion. Two thirds of Austria is mountainous, and skiing is both the predominant pastime and a principal industry: a number of large ski manufacturers are Austrian, and many towns survive on ski tourism alone. The country has long dominated the sport of ski racing: Austrian men have won the over-all World Cup title five times in the past six years, and in 2001 they won every major Alpine title. "People like to say that in Austria skiing is like football, baseball, and basketball put together, but that doesn't capture the magnitude of it," Phil McNichol, the head coach of the United States men's ski team, says. "You can stay at the tiniest *Gasthof* in the smallest village, and there will be this little hausfrau there, and if you ask her about skiing she'll start rattling off World Cup split times from ten years ago. It's shocking."

My cousin Heimo, who lives in a village a couple of hours from Flachau, likes to rail against the "mythologizing" of Austrian skiers. "It's absurd, this hero worship," he told me when I visited. "They do well in this one activity, so we assume they can do anything. Our political system is full of former ski stars." Yet Heimo still remembers how it felt, thirty years ago, when Karl (the Great) Schranz, a prohibitive favorite at the Sapporo Olympics, was disqualified for violating his amateur status. "It was a national catastrophe," he says. "When Schranz came back to Vienna, the crowd that met him in the Heldenplatz was larger than during the Anschluss." Heimo's seventy-three-year-old mother, Helga, was washing dishes in the next room while we talked. "If Japan weren't so far away," she joked, hefting a pot like a battle-axe, "we would have declared war."

Maier, who is thirty-one, is the ideal archetype for such sagas. Blond and blue-eyed, with a face as sturdy as a *Kugelhopf*, he's a simple man with epic ambitions—"more Hector than Odysseus," Heimo says. Like most Austrian skiers, Maier has never moved away from home, and never quite adjusted to his celebrity. When we first met, in Flachau, he had just come from filming a live talk show in Berlin, in a cavernous auditorium of the kind usually favored by televangelists. He had spent an hour sitting stiffly on a couch beside Jennifer Lopez and Peter Falk, neither of whom had much idea what their wacky German host was saying. When Lopez walked offstage after her interview, the cameramen focussed on her famous behind, then replayed the shot in lurid slow motion. "I was too shy to watch," Maier told me.

I'd often heard Maier's manner described as robotic, and his stilted English seemed to bear this out ("I fell on my button and it was big swollen"). But when we switched to the singsong of his native dialect, with its amiable gutturals and contractions, he showed a certain gruff good nature—almost an innocence. "I've stayed pretty much the same," he said. "I'm a skier and I live for skiing."

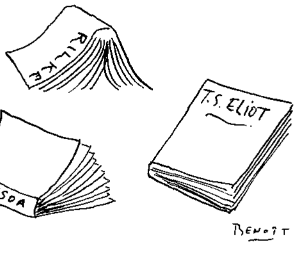
Maier's legend is rooted, in part, in his unpromising adolescence. He first put on skis at the age of three and was racing by five. His father, Hermann, Sr., was a local racer who now runs a ski school in Flachau. He drilled his son in textbook techniques, then sent him off, as a ninth grader, to a nearby ski academy in Schladming. Less than a year later, the academy sent him back. Maier had Osgood-Schlatter syndrome—a growth disorder that often strikes young athletes, inflaming the tendon that connects the kneecap to the tibia. From the ages of sixteen to twenty-two, when most future Olympians are competing in national races, Maier worked as a bricklayer in Flachau. He seems to have enjoyed the work, but he never stopped skiing. In the winters, he would wake up before dawn, stick a few tree branches in the slopes above town, and work on his slaloming technique. He became an avid weight lifter, adding nearly sixty pounds of pure muscle, and grew nine inches in two years. By the time he was nineteen, he was a certified instructor at his father's ski school and was no longer suffering from the growth disorder. By twenty-one, he was champion of Salzburg. By twenty-four, he had won his first World Cup race.

The World Cup ski circuit is among the most gruelling and dangerous sporting events in the world. It consists of around forty races on two or more continents over the course of six months. Unlike the Winter Olympics or the biennial World Championships, the World Cup is held every year. It's a team competition as well as an individual one: each time a racer wins or places in the top thirty, he racks up points for his country as well as for himself—from a hundred points for first place to one point for thirtieth. There are four kinds of events: slalom, giant slalom, super-G, and downhill. Slaloms have shorter, slower courses with sharper turns; the downhills and super-Gs focus on speed, with spectacular jumps and long stretches of pure gliding. Many skiers specialize in only one event, but to win the over-all title—the most coveted prize in skiing—a racer has to dominate two or three, skiing at a death-defying pace week after week. An Olympic gold medal, by contrast, is just a good day's work.

When Maier joined the circuit, in 1996, the Austrian team was so strong that at least five racers who didn't make the cut could have starred in other countries. Their technique—crystallized on village slopes, refined by ski academies and local race circuits—was both classic and so consistent as to seem factory-made. Still, Maier was something new. His skiing was as fearless as it was efficient. His body, now six feet and more than two hundred pounds, had the squat, vulcanized look of a Stretch Armstrong toy. At the Nagano Olympics, in 1998, Maier hit a bump on the downhill course at nearly seventy miles an hour and was hurled a hundred yards across the ice, through two fences, and into a snowbank. "I went up in the air and was looking at the sky," he later remembered. "I looked down at the snow and waited for the crash." It was among the most spectacular falls ever filmed at the Games, and Maier seemed certain to have sustained serious injuries. Instead, he stood up, brushed the snow from his spandex suit, and won two gold medals in the next week.

They called him the Beast, the Monster, the Alien. They called him the Racin' Mason and Sup-Hermann. They called him the Herminator, in honor of the man-machine played by Austria's other favorite son, Arnold Schwarzenegger. (The two later met in Vail, Colorado, and challenged each other to an arm-wrestling contest; Schwarzenegger lost.) Maier went on to win the World Cup over-all title three times in four years, earning nine individual titles in the process. In 2001, he matched the record of thirteen wins in a season, set by Sweden's Ingemar Stenmark in 1979. Maier's victories were so resounding, his injuries so rare, that even his parents took to using his nickname.

"*Ja, ja, der Herr-mee-nah-tor,*" his father told me one afternoon. We were sitting in his house in Flachau, for which his son had laid some of the bricks. All around us lay carved chests and other gifts from the grateful Austrian citizenry. "He had an aura about him. He felt that he couldn't be injured, that nothing could happen to him." Hermann, Sr., showed me a snapshot of his son with a pith helmet on, grinning atop a cherry-red motorcycle with "The Herminator" emblazoned on the gas tank. "But then we saw that he is like any other human being."



On the evening of August 24, 2001, Maier was riding his motorcycle home from a workout at his training facility, in Obertauern, twenty miles from Flachau. After a summer of skiing in the mountains of Chile, he was in the best shape of his career. ("I was physically perfect," he later said.) He was only ten minutes from home when a driver abruptly swerved in front of him. Unable to brake in time, Maier collided with the car and was catapulted across a small stream and into a ditch. He narrowly missed a street lamp in his flight and landed so hard that he broke two front teeth. His doctor, Harald Aufmesser, happened to live near the scene of the accident, and he and his brother were the first people to find him. "He was lying on his back with a lot of blood on his face, but he was very disciplined," Aufmesser remembers. "He said, 'Hey, it's me. Help me.' "

Maier's lower right leg was nearly torn off by the collision. It hung from a few strands of muscle and skin, with an open wound the size of his hand. "I was lying there holding my foot," he recalls. "It wasn't pointing in the right direction." An amputation seemed likely, but the most dangerous injuries were internal. Maier's hips and buttocks were so badly bruised that they began to swell up like saddlebags, compressing the nerves and paralyzing his lower body. (The doctors thought at first that he had broken his spine.) So much tissue had been crushed that it released myoglobin, which is toxic to the kidneys, causing almost total renal failure. "It was a very close thing," his mother, Gerti, told me. "I was in Hermann's room one day and he said, 'Mother, is my life in danger?' And I said, 'Not anymore. . . . Today.' "

It took surgeons seven hours to save his leg. They reinforced the bones with a fifteen-inch titanium rod and covered the open wound with a skin graft from his upper left arm. Then the rebuilding began in earnest. Success in professional sports is a direct measure of the athlete's willingness to get hurt and ability to heal quickly. Nowhere is this more true than in skiing: racers often reach speeds of more than eighty m.p.h., and, on some courses, twenty per cent of them fail to make it down the hill. In 2001, Bill Johnson, one of the premier American skiers of the nineteen-eighties, was left severely brain-damaged after a crash in Whitefish, Montana. Countless others have suffered lesser injuries. "In football or basketball, a blown knee is a potentially career-ending injury," Steve Porino, a former member of the United States ski team, told me. "In skiing, it's a rite of passage."

To contend with this endless series of mishaps, sports medicine has evolved in recent years into what is almost a separate branch of science—an amalgam of surgery, psychology, alternative medicine, and high technology. ("Basically, the Army invents shit and we use it," Andy Walshe, the head of sports science for the American team, told me.) The Austrians are masters of this strange art, and Maier is their most willing subject. In the past two years, he has been treated by osteopaths, chiropractors, and homeopaths; his muscles have been soothed by ultrasound, zapped by lasers and electrical shocks, and manipulated by daily massages and "lymph drainages." The facility in Obertauern, where he and other Olympic athletes train, is perched nearly six thousand feet above sea level, and boasts some devices so arcane that even his doctors don't understand them.

"This instrument has been very helpful to Hermann," Aufmesser told me when I visited, pointing to a machine invented by the Greek physicist P. T. Pappas. The machine generates magnetic pulses, he explained, which are pumped through a translucent white coil and into an athlete's injured limbs. "It's not really clear how the therapy works in science, but it seems to influence the cells positively." In another room, a bed of ground quartz hung suspended in a gleaming metal pod. "This is called Prognos," I was told. "It was developed by the Russian space program for the cosmonauts on Mir, but it's based on traditional Chinese medicine." When Maier lies in the pod, it scans his meridian points, analyzes any blockages with a computer, then ministers to them with music, heat, aromatherapy, magnetic-resonance therapy, and colored lights.

Before the accident, Maier's training regimen was notoriously rigorous. Afterward, it took over his life completely. Every day, six days a week, he arrives at Obertauern around eight-forty-five in the morning and has his blood tested for the effects of the previous day's training and for possible infections. Then he works his way from machine to machine. One, a vibrating platform developed by a trainer for the Chicago Bulls, replicates the effects of leaping up and down. After standing on it for one minute—the equivalent of a hundred and fifty leaps, I was told—I could barely walk. Another, designed in Slovakia, looks like an ordinary stationary bicycle but monitors the power in each leg. Maier has spent thousands of hours on this and other stationary bikes, willing his atrophied right leg back into shape.

AL FRIPP
FILLING IN FOR THE VACATIONING HERB NELSON

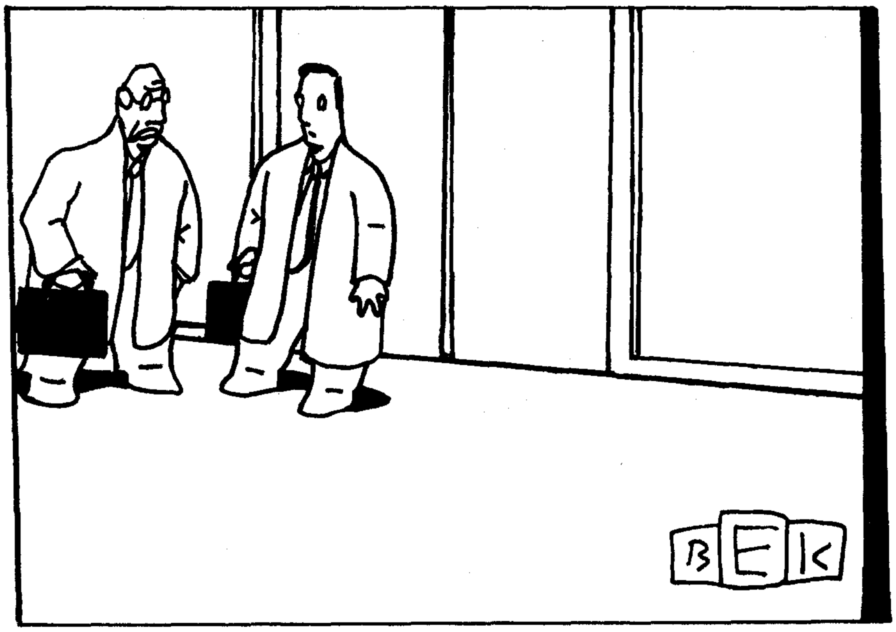
Ski races last less than a minute or two, but Maier trains like a middle-distance runner, mixing brief weight-lifting sessions with endurance exercises. Every hour or so, his trainers prick one of his earlobes, then place a capsule of his blood in one of six lactate analyzers. Lactate is a sensitive gauge of physical effort: muscles produce it whenever they run out of oxygen to consume. If Maier's levels are too low, he steps up his workout; if they're high, he gets on the bike and cools off. In this way, his trainers say, he is gradually increasing the oxygen-carrying capacity of his blood without damaging his muscles or ligaments by overtraining. ("We get the same effect as EPO," his agent told me, referring to the doping hormone erythropoietin, "except it's legal.") After ten hours or so, Maier takes a shower and goes home. Then he starts over again the next day. "You have to be patient, and I am a very patient person," he told me. "But when you are really in a good condition you only ski for yourself. I will be happy when I get rid of this thinking again."

Last January, in Kitzbühel, Austria, Maier stood in the starting gate for his first super-G in two years. The World Cup season was half over, and he had no chance of competing for the overall title. To some observers, in any case, "Das Comeback" seemed a mere publicity stunt—a cynical ploy to please his sponsors. Maier was back on skis almost five months after his accident, but that was wonder enough. How could he possibly hope to race? The course at Kitzbühel is known as the most dangerous in the world. In 1987, the Canadian skier

Todd Brooker ended his career there, tearing all four ligaments in one knee, damaging a retina, and hitting his head so hard that he has no memory of the crash. When a skier makes a sharp turn on such a course, the force pressing down on his body is enormous, and is largely borne by the joints. Yet Maier's rebuilt right leg never faltered. Standing on the podium afterward, clutching the victor's trophy in the driving snow, he broke into tears.

"It was then that we realized, My God, Maier has emotions!" the m.c. declared three weeks later, on the night of the victory celebration in Flachau. (Schwarzenegger had called earlier to offer his congratulations.) The crowd had been growing more raucous as the night went on, but the m.c.'s remark left an awkward silence. "Well, I had them before, too," Maier muttered. "The people here have seen me go through lots of highs and lows." He turned to the crowd and grinned reassuringly. Then he announced that for his final act he would like to be shot from the cannon beside the stage.

This was the perfect cue for "The Hermann Maier March," but by then the members of the oompah band were half frozen in their skimpy Tyrolian outfits. As the director lifted his baton, the woodwinds flexed their fingers frantically to get the blood moving. Their first notes sounded more like a distress call than like music, but the crowd soon caught the tune. "Hermann Maier, Hermann Maier, *er ist so schnell, er ist so chic*," someone sang beside me. After a verse or two, Maier grabbed the baton and began strutting across the stage like a majorette. "Next year, he'll lead the World Cup just like this!" the *Bürgermeister* bellowed. The Herminator was back.



*"I'm tired of being chained to myself twenty-four hours a day."*

• •

In the film that gave Maier his nickname, the fate of humanity hinges, as they say, on one man's ability to stop an unstoppable machine. Earth, in the near future, has been taken over by intelligent robots. To quash what remains of humanity, they've sent a murderous cyborg—the Terminator—back in time to kill the woman who will one day give birth to the leader of the resistance. The resistance fighters, meanwhile, have sent back a champion of their own. Skinny, scruffy, slow of speech, Kyle Reese makes an unlikely hero at first. While the Terminator arrives at the battle site fresh from the factory, bulked up and blandly self-confident, Reese is nearly killed in transit. He spends most of the movie's early scenes careering around obstacles, trying desperately to arm and outfit himself while Schwarzenegger blasts away. It's only after an hour or so that you realize that the two are fairly evenly matched. The Terminator is stronger, infinitely sturdier, and perfectly programmed; Reese is wilier and quicker on his feet. Where the cyborg sees only straight lines from point to point, Reese, trained as a guerrilla fighter, sees shortcuts everywhere.

The skiing world has taken years to produce a Kyle Reese worthy of the Herminator, and he comes, appropriately, from out of nowhere—that is, from the United States. Americans have long been underachievers in Alpine skiing, their successes rarely commensurate with the size of their mountains or of their population. Since the first Winter Olympics were held, in 1924, American skiers have won only thirty-six Alpine medals in all, compared with sixty for the Swiss and a hundred and three for the Austrians. Even when they've fared well—as when Phil Mahre won the World Cup over-all title three years running, in the early nineteen-eighties—they have been quickly forgotten at home. The situation is almost the reverse of that in Austria: so few Americans live near a ski slope that the sport is a luxury of the élite and the dwindling number lucky enough to be born in the mountains. "The demise of the small ski town has been the great tragedy of American skiing," Phil McNichol says. "It used to be that almost all of our skiers were the sons of ski coaches or lift operators. Nowadays, those kids can't even get close to the slopes. In Aspen or Vail, the real estate is so expensive that they have to live in Leadville or the next town over."

Bode Miller, Maier's principal rival for this year's World Cup and the best American skier in twenty years, is one of the last of the slope rats. He was born in 1977, in his grandparents' ski lodge, in the White Mountains near Franconia, New Hampshire. His father, Woody, was a member of the ski patrol; his mother, Joanne, came from a family of racers. Both were hippies of a peculiarly austere Yankee variety. For the first seven years of his life, Bode lived in a fifteen-by-twenty-five-foot cabin three-quarters of a mile up Kinsman Mountain, without electricity or plumbing. "Sometimes it got so cold that cups of water would freeze on the floor in the morning," Woody told me. "We'd just wear more

### A SHORT HISTORY OF MY LIFE

Unlike Lao-tzu, conceived of a shooting star, it is said,
And carried inside his mother's womb
For 62 years, and born, it's said once again, with white hair,
I was born on a Sunday morning,
untouched by the heavens,
Some hair, no teeth, the shadows of twilight in my heart,
And a long way from the way.
Shiloh, the Civil War battleground, was just next door,
The Tennessee River soft shift at my head and feet.
The dun-colored buffalo, the sands of the desert,
Gatekeeper and characters
were dragon years from then.

Like Dionysus, I was born for a second time.
From the flesh of Italy's left thigh, I emerged one January
Into a different world.
It made a lot of sense,
Hidden away, as I had been, for almost a life.
And I entered it open-eyed, the wind in my ears,

clothes." For a while, Woody made a living selling Futz bars—a healthy snack of his own invention, made of dried fruit, nuts, and maple syrup that he ground together at home—while Joanne homeschooled Bode and his three siblings. In the summer, the family ran a tennis camp at the lodge. In the winter, they skied and skated, walking home on trails so slick that Bode could slide all the way down the mountain on a primitive snowboard. The first time he put on skis, at the age of three, his mother held him between her knees and went with him. Bode shouted, "Let go! Let go!" the whole way down.

The White Mountains are the northern apex of the Appalachian range, but compared with the Austrian Alps they barely qualify as mountains at all. Their slopes are narrow and twisting, carved from forests of sugar maple and pine, and so short that until the late nineteen-sixties some skiers still walked to the top. The runs on Cannon Mountain, where Miller skied as a boy, drop two thousand feet, and are steep even by Alpine standards. But, if the area has produced some of America's best skiers, it is due less to topography than to weather. Wind gauges on nearby Mt. Washington have recorded the most violent gusts ever measured on land—two hundred and thirty-one m.p.h.—and local ski conditions are notoriously rough. "We'll get a day of wicked rain and then a day of wicked cold and then another day of rain, over and over, until you get what they call boilerplate—just hard, hard ice," Miller's uncle, Bill Kenney, says. "Basically, it's uninhabitable here." He is exaggerating only slightly.

Kenney believes that these mountains instill a certain cussed adaptability in their skiers. Woody says that Bode was born that way. "When he came out, his eyes were open and they were looking up at me just as calm as can be. They were, like, 'Come on! Get the rest of me out.' " By the time he was a teen-ager, Miller was skiing on a scholarship at Carrabassett Valley Academy, in Maine, and irritating coaches. He had long, flailing limbs and a high center of gravity—the opposite of a human bulldozer like Maier. His technique was even gawkier than his physique: he liked to take turns impossibly late, leaning back like a water-skier, and he often failed to plant his poles. "There were times when I saw him crash every single race for six weeks," Chip Cochrane, his coach at Carrabassett, says. "We'd offer suggestions, and he would just say, 'No, no, no.' He had his own ideas about everything."

Off the slopes, Miller was a star athlete: he won a state championship in tennis and was a standout in soccer (he probably could have played either sport professionally). On the slopes, he was sometimes a laughingstock. Cochrane says that there were moments when you could see that he was going as fast as anyone could possibly go. He just never managed to run a whole race at that speed. "People thought he was lazy. They wanted to kick him off the ski team," his former teammate Forest Carey remembers. Carey, who is a year older than Miller, was his alter ego at Carrabassett. He did everything right in training and was soon plucked from the school by the national team. When I asked him if he agreed with Miller's reputation at the time, he laughed, and said, "Yeah. I was kicking his butt for sure."

Then, in 1996, near the end of Miller's senior year, a ski rep named George Tormey asked him if he would like to try out a new pair of skis. Known as "carving skis," and inspired by snowboards, they were unusually short, with flared tips and tails and concave sides. They were meant for the recreational market—no serious racer would take a chance on such a radical design—but Tormey knew that Miller was a special case. "George just saw this incredible balance in him," Tormey's colleague Dan Harvey told me. (Tormey died in 2000, in a motorcycle accident.) "The other companies thought Bode was kind of a renegade and a juvenile delinquent. But George used to say that he was like a cat being thrown over an icy driveway: his body was every which way in the air, but he'd still land on his feet." A kid like that, Tormey thought, might just appreciate these strange new skis.

For more than a century, skis had been shaped essentially the same way: long and thin, with straight or nearly straight sides. And that shape had dictated a certain skiing style. Straight skis do well on straight paths; the longer the ski, the faster it goes. But turning, especially at high speeds, can be a challenge. The ski wants to go one way, the body another, and only great force can overcome great momentum. The finest racers, like Ingemar Stenmark, could make the brutal physics of

The slake of honey and slow wine awake on my tongue.
Three years I stood in S. Zeno's doors,
                                        and took, more Rome than Rome,
Whatever was offered me.
The snows of the Dolomites advanced to my footfalls.
The lemons of Lago di Garda fell to my hands.

Fast-forward some forty-five years,
                                        and a third postpartum blue.
But where, as the poet asked, will you find it in history?
Alluding to something else.
Nowhere but here, my one and only, nowhere but here.
My ears and my sick senses seem pure with the sound of water.
I'm back, and it's lilac time,
The creeks running eastward unseen through the dank morning,
Beginning of June. No light on leaf,
No wind in the evergreens, no bow in the still-blond grasses.
The world in its dark grace.
                                        I have tried to record it.

—*Charles Wright*

a turn look almost elegant. Or, like Maier, they could take a kind of pleasure in the brutality. Between turns, they stood nearly upright, flattening out their skis and gliding. When a gate approached, they planted their poles and threw their weight forward and to one side, launching themselves into an abrupt "J" turn. The skis skidded around, as they were forced into the snow, then started gliding again when the path turned straight.

Carving skis changed this equation entirely. With their short, hourglass shape, they were made for turning—like snowboards, some were originally designed to be maneuvered without poles. A skier could now stay crouched over the center of his skis all the way down a hill, rolling his ankles one way or the other to change direction. As his skis went up on edge, their flared ends dug in and their thin midsections bent down, forming curved rails that arced through the snow. Rather than gliding and skidding from gate to gate, racers could now "ride the edges," carving a continuous set of curves down the slope. Being shorter, carving skis were slightly slower in the straightaways, but they more than made up for it on the turns. "We all thought we were carving turns before we put these on," the former ski racer Steve Porino told me. "But we used to go from eighty miles an hour to fifty. Now, it's just sixty-five all the way down."

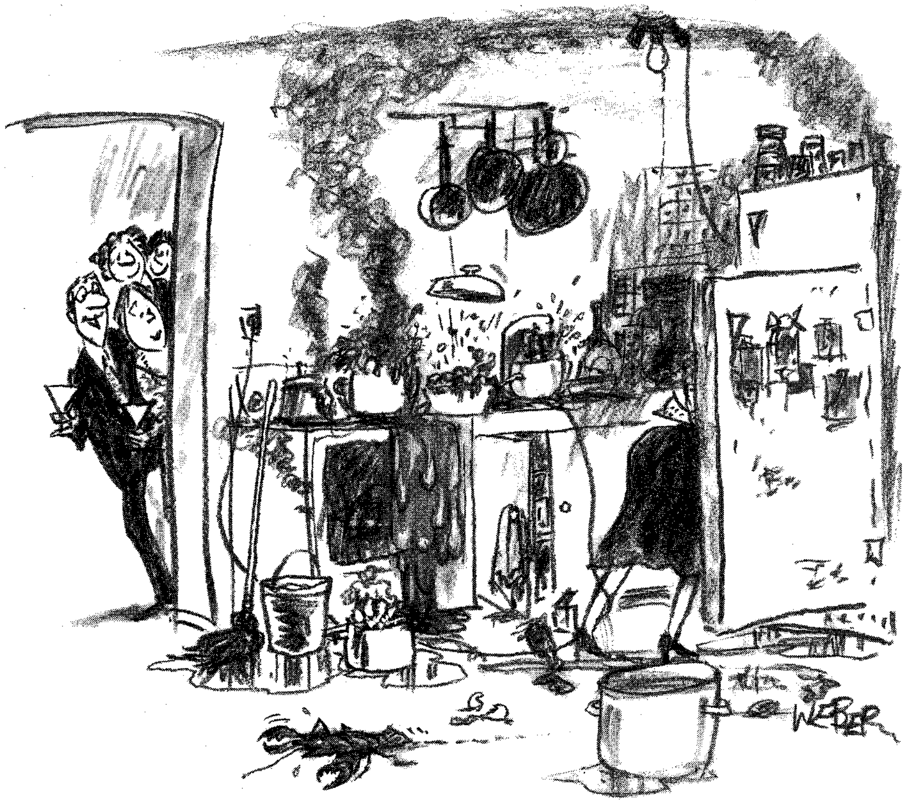
The first time Miller tried carving skis, he was eighteen years old and hadn't caught the attention of the national team. Yet he knew, within five turns on his first run, that the rules had changed. "I was, like, 'Holy shit! I have to get on this *now!*' " he told me. The skis came in only one size, Tormey warned. (Speed and slalom events usually require different skis.) No racer in the world had worn them, and Miller would be ridiculed for using a recreational ski. He didn't care. A week later, he went to the Junior Olympics, in Sugarloaf, Maine, and wore the skis in the super-G and the giant slalom. He won the first by 2.02 seconds and the second by 2.11 seconds—an eternity in ski racing. "The next year, they must have sold thirty pairs of those skis around here," Cochrane says. "Everybody wanted them."

But nobody skied like Miller. Carving skis were hard on the ankles and knees at high speeds; they sometimes turned too easily, and they were liable to squirt out from beneath you if you leaned back too far. For athletes steeped in classic technique, this took some getting used to. Miller, though, had never stopped experimenting. He was used to leaning back on his skis, he had great footwork thanks to tennis and soccer, and his sense of balance improved year after year. While other skiers sat on exercise bikes, he learned to ride a unicycle. While they bulked up with weights, he stretched a rope between two trees in his back yard, and practiced tightrope walking. Two summers ago, Miller spent six weeks logrolling in Wisconsin. His girlfriend at the time, Lizzie Hoeschler, has been logrolling since childhood and is ranked fourth in the world in the sport. "It's very hard to learn as an adult," she told me. "It's just weird to stand on a log that is floating in the water. But Bode was rolling before too long." By the end of the summer, Hoeschler had a tough time knocking him off.

In most professional sports, coaches take athletes of great talent and slowly grind them into super-talents, Phil McNichol says. "But we didn't develop Bode. He is an explorer and he happened to come along when the technology was developing. So he's been exploring the evolution of skiing."

Having seen what carving skis could do, Miller pushed for ever more radical designs. He joined the national team in 1996 and began working closely with technicians at ski companies such as K2, Fischer, and Rossignol. Every spring, after the last World Cup race, he takes the latest models on the slopes and times them. He tests their turning and gliding speed, their stability in hard turns, and how well they dampen "chatter" vibrating up from the ice. He keeps track of how these variables change as the ice freezes and thaws and refreezes during the day. When he's done, he picks his favorites and suggests improvements for the next batch.

"I think Bode is reinventing skiing," Chip Cochrane says. "He's responsible, to a large degree, for the technique being used now." Year by year, Miller's skis have grown smaller, shapelier, more maneuverable—and these changes have reshaped skis everywhere. "Basically, I have ninety-five per cent control over what is built," Miller told me. Then he launched into a lengthy disquisition on "sidecuts" and "snow dis-



*"So this is where the magic happens."*

placement." With a perpetual tan and sun-shot brown hair, a laconic voice and vague, dreaming eyes, Miller has become a poster boy for the X-Games generation; a symbol of mindless daredevilry. Yet he's most at ease discussing technicalities, and he hardly pretends to be a role model. "You won't find a coach in the world that will shape an athlete to look the way that I did five years ago," he told me. "And you can't get to where I am now without going the way I was then."

By the time Miller joined the World Cup circuit, in 1997, every racer on it was using carving skis. It was Miller, though, who pushed the new technology furthest—even when it meant becoming a crash-test dummy again. Ski racing is as much about terrain as technique: the better you know a course, the faster and safer you can ski it. Maier, who was at his peak in those years, had grown up in the Alps and spent a year apprenticing on the Europa Cup circuit. Miller had never seen many of these mountains before. By virtue of being a late bloomer, he had skipped the Europa Cup entirely. At one point, four years ago, he failed to finish sixteen of twenty World Cup races. During some runs, other skiers would cluster around the video monitors just to see if he would crash again.

Little by little, though, he got used to the courses. He settled on his skis and simply grew up: between the ages of seventeen and twenty-two, he put on fifty pounds of muscle. (He is now six feet two and weighs two hundred and ten pounds.) After so many trip-ups and wipeouts, he had an acrobat's ability to skirt the edge of disaster. "He got comfortable being out of the comfort zone," Cochrane says. "Sometimes his whole run was recovery. He'd sit back, get twisted around, hands behind him, skis tangled up, poles jammed. He was pulling stuff off you wouldn't think was possible, but he kept it going down the hill." In 2001, at Val D'Isère, in the French Alps, Miller fell on his hip during the giant slalom, only to vault up again and win the race. At the Salt Lake City Olympics, in 2002, he stumbled during the downhill portion of the combined event, then surged back in the slalom the same day to win the silver. A week later, he won another silver, in the giant slalom.

Last year, Miller finished nearly every race he started, winning two gold medals and a silver at the World Championships, in Saint-Moritz. He finished second in the over-all World Cup standings, behind the Austrian Stephan Eberharter. In the minds of many journalists and competitors, Miller was the best skier in the world. At least, until the return of Hermann Maier.

If you want to know the difference between Maier and Miller, I was often told, just watch them during the ten seconds before a run. "Hermann is like a bull in the gate at a rodeo," Nate Vinton, a former racer who now writes for a magazine called *Ski Racing*, said. "He gets his confidence up by working himself into this animal state. He's ferocious. He thrashes around until strands of spit are coming out of his mouth and down his chin." Miller, by contrast, hardly moves. "He just stands there. He has this way of looking out across the valley, sort of at the mountains. To tell you the truth, he looks stoned. He doesn't even plant his poles on the other side of the line until the last second. And then he just sort of . . . tips over."

As athletes, the two men have nearly opposite strengths. Maier is so strong and quick that he would have been a great decathlete, his trainer, Heinrich Bergmüller, told me in Obertauern. "Put a discus in his hand and he immediately throws it forty metres. Give him a shot put and he throws thirteen metres." Miller has extraordinary reflexes and hand-eye coördination. Both men have won the annual Superstars competition, in Jamaica, which pits the best athletes from various sports against one another. Whereas Maier steamrolled the event, Miller, typically, transformed it. For more than twenty-five years, athletes in the obstacle course had been running up to the wall, grabbing the rope beside it, and clambering up like Army recruits. Miller chose another tactic: he put on spiked shoes, ignored the rope, and simply ran up the wall, grabbing the upper edge and vaulting over. "I'm like Spider-Man," he said. "*Kazow!*"

This past October, in Sölden, Austria, at the opening race of the World

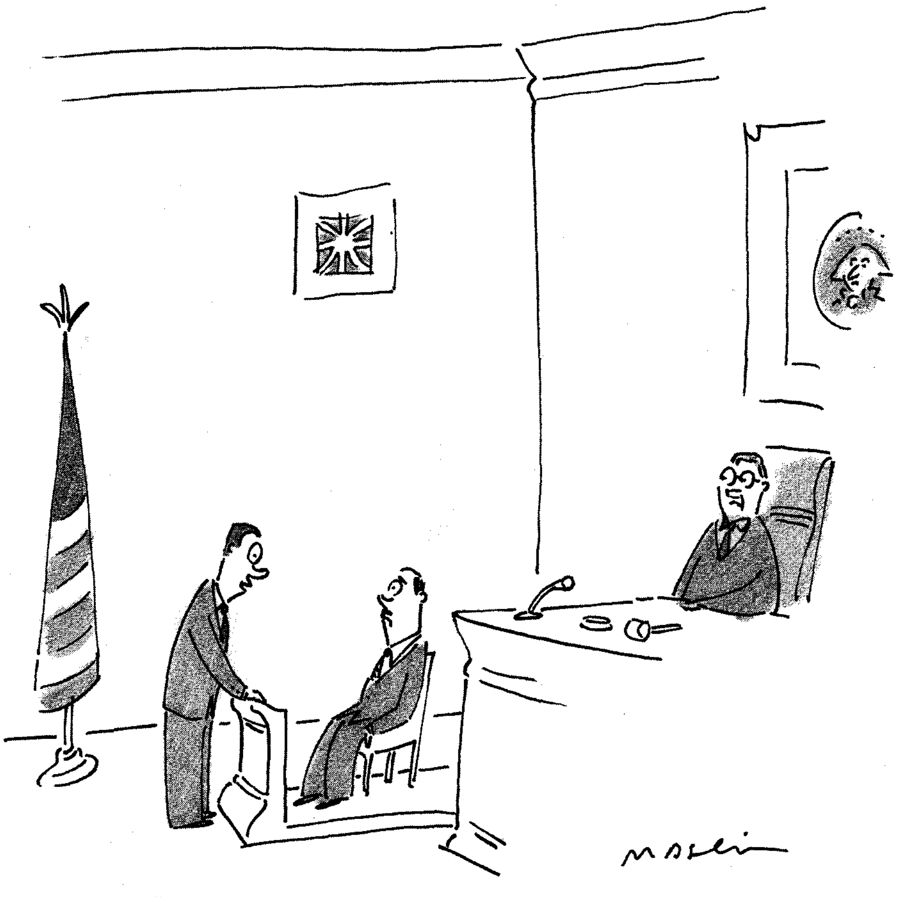
Cup season, the local papers were preoccupied with Maier and Eberharter, the twin pillars of the Austrian team, who are reputed to hate each other. The thirty-four-year-old Eberharter—despite a chiselled profile, smoldering eyes, and back-to-back World Cup over-all titles—has never quite captured the people's hearts. His greatest victories have come when Maier was injured, and the knowledge seems to have embittered him. Each time that Maier has won the World Cup over-all title, he has been named Austria's athlete of the year. When Eberharter won the over-all title last year, a Ping-Pong player was named athlete of the year instead.

Before the race at Sölden, I asked Bergmüller to compare Eberharter with Maier. He shook his head: "He only has sixty per cent of what Hermann has." But, when I mentioned Miller, his face twitched with a nervous respect. "*Er ist ein Bewegungstalent*," he said. A movement prodigy. (The Austrian head coach, Hans Pum, later used the same phrase.) "If he worked as hard as Hermann, I think he might be unbeatable." While Maier had spent the summer pricking his earlobes and grinding away on his Slovakian bicycle, Miller had gone fly-fishing in British Columbia. He had joined a soccer league and taught at his parents' tennis camp. He was in extraordinary shape by most standards, but modern trainers expect perfection. "Yeah, I could eat exactly what they tell me to eat, and always sleep nine hours a night, and be a total robot," Miller told me. "And I'm positive I would be in much better physical condition. But in the end I'm not trying to win as many races as I can. I'm trying to have a happy life. And being happy seems to help me perform at my peak." At Sölden, as my aunt Helga and everyone else in Austria seemed to know, Miller—not Maier or Eberharter—had posted the fastest times in training.

On the morning of the race, ten thousand fans were stacked in bleachers at the bottom of the Rettenbach glacier, surrounded by the granite peaks of the Tyrol. For all the beauty of its setting, Alpine skiing isn't much of a spectator sport. The racers are hidden from view most of the time, and cameras can't capture their vertiginous speed. When they finally appear on a distant crest, backlit against the vaulting sky like angelic couriers, the sight has a certain grandeur. But most fans come for the music and the beer. Like Maier, the other European skiers all have their own fan clubs, who trail them from race to race. At Sölden, the Germans had an accordion player, the Austrians a live goat. The French had on matching turquoise snowsuits—fashionable, though not especially sporty—and the Swiss were dressed like court jesters. Everyone had spent the night drinking and dancing, had woken up early to put on face paint, and now swayed bleary-eyed around their musicians, braying folk tunes and blowing air horns.

I spotted Maier's mother in the stands, a few seats down from a fan in a pig suit. The pig looked more excited than she did. World Cup races are run on sheets of pure ice—special tillers often go over the course beforehand, injecting water into the snow so that it hardens a foot down or more. "It's like race-car driving, only they're the race cars," one ski technician told me. Just how Maier's body would bear the strain remained unclear. After two years of rehabilitation, his right foot was still swollen—it was half again the size of his left—and the leg was stiff and sore. "Ze nail, ze big nail, is now a big problem," he had told me in Flachau, referring to the titanium rod that had been in his leg. When his doctors removed it, they had to split apart the tendon covering his kneecap, and it is now permanently sore.

"I think he will be in pain the rest of his life," his mother says. "But I would never tell him not to race." Slender and tan, with bleached-blond hair and stylishly squinty glasses, Gerti Maier was once a recreational racer. When she was sixteen years old, the leather binding on her right ski broke as she was hurtling downhill. Her right ankle promptly snapped, and, as the ski flailed around on its broken binding, it struck her left shin and broke it as well. "I stopped, put the ski back on, and kept on going," she remembers. "After a while, I sank to my knees." When she got home, she refused to see a doctor, insisting that she would go skiing again the next day. "So I know what it's like to have your mother tell you, 'No, you can't do it,' " she



*"You have that innocent-until-proved guilty look."*

says. “There are times, watching him, when my whole body is shaking from worry. But I don’t say anything.”

The race at Sölden was a giant slalom, often called the cornerstone of ski racing, because it tests so many skills. To win it, a racer must post the fastest combined time for two runs down the hill, each on a slightly different course. The order in which ski racers run is determined by their results over the previous year, with the seven fastest racers drawing from a hat to see who goes first. Each run carves up the course a little more, creating ridges and ruts that diminish a racer’s speed. Icing down the slopes slows this process a bit, but after the first twenty-five or thirty runs racers have little hope of posting a fast time.

Eighty skiers were competing at Sölden, with Miller going seventh and Maier twenty-sixth. (Although Maier was the reigning champion of the giant slalom before his accident, he had been inactive too long to earn a top seed.) The course was fast for a giant slalom—“We were looking down the slope going, ‘Are those gates really lined up that straight?’ ” Miller later said—and right away people began to crash. Erik Schlopy, an American skier who broke his back in a race in 1993, tripped up at the fourth gate, scissor-stepped downhill, and fell so hard that he cracked both skis in half. Frédéric Covili, a Frenchman who had won the same race two years earlier, managed to ski cleanly, however, and posted a time of 1:02:88.

As Miller stood at the gate, visible from below only on a giant video monitor, the loudspeakers blasted Bruce Springsteen’s “Born in the U.S.A.” The crowd cheered just the same. Miller is enormously popular in Europe—at least two women I saw had “Bode” painted on their cheeks. He didn’t disappoint them. As usual, he started slowly, falling a third of a second behind Covili at the first split. Then, little by little, he accelerated. Each time he approached a gate, he took a slightly more direct path than the racers before him, waiting until the very last moment to turn. “He’s straight and late,” Willi Wiltz, a technician with the American team, had explained the night before, while waxing skis at the hotel. “And he gets away with it. He’s almost defying the laws of physics.” Just when Miller’s long limbs seemed about to tangle up, his skis about to rocket out from under him, he shuffled his feet, shifted his balance, and made the turn—shaving another fraction of a second off his run.

When he skidded to a stop, sending a plume of snow toward the stands, he was nine-hundredths of a second ahead of Covili and in first place. It was a tenuous lead, however, and it would be hard to hold. The top thirty-one skiers would now take their second runs in reverse descending order, to even their chances. Miller would go down dead last, on a thoroughly chopped-up course.

*“Gotta run, Sid! The cashmere everybody’s been talking about is now twenty per cent off!”*

Maier, meanwhile, was stuck in nineteenth place. His ferocity at the starting gate notwithstanding, he had skied a surprisingly conservative line. “I am more ski-instructor style,” he had told me before the race. “Miller is more Texas style—wild.” Maier’s reconstructed leg couldn’t always feel the edge of its ski as he turned, making slaloms much harder for him than speed events. Still, as he surged out of the gate for his second run, he seemed to regain his form. Having tested the turns on his previous run, he jackhammered through them with something of his old, maniacal precision. When he crossed the finish line, his combined time was 2:12:67—just fast enough for the lead. “I am speechless!” the announcer shouted. “Hermann Maier in the lead!”

The euphoria was short-lived. The next skier, Tobias Gruenenfelder, of Switzerland, sliced more than half a second off Maier’s time, and the Austrian Heinz Schilchegger (whose fans had brought the goat) was even faster. Ski races are only rarely marked by mounting tension, no matter how hard their announcers work to create it. The ice gets rougher, the leaders lose their nerve or risk too much. The times, instead of ratcheting down, ratchet up. Yet at Sölden every racer seemed to go faster than the last. By the time Covili came down, next to last and in excellent form, nearly two seconds had been cut off Maier’s time.

It was hard to imagine anyone going faster. Then again, Miller has been called the King of the Second Run: no skier adjusts to a course as quickly or can improvise as fluidly. “He may be the greatest adaptive athlete out there,” the skier Steve Porino says. “I’ve heard coaches say that if there were a combined event where you had to go from one race to the next without being able to inspect the course, Bode would always win it.” Miller later said that he could have taken three more runs at Sölden that day and gone faster every time. As it was, he hurtled down the slope with his usual controlled abandon and took yet another second off Covili’s time.

Afterward, a local reporter glumly

noted that it was an Austrian national holiday, but for the first time in memory no Austrian was on the podium: Maier had finished sixteenth, Eberharter eighth. Straight and late had won the race.

*"I'm between congregations."*

"Bode just boggles the European mind," his coach Phil McNichol told me two weeks later. We were having drinks at the annual fund-raising ball, in Manhattan, for the United States ski and snowboarding teams. "Their own athletic upbringing is so methodical and programmed. How can he ski like that and not do what they do?" Miller's genius has depended on timing as well as on talent, he said. Had he grown up a decade earlier, he might have come to carving skis too late. Until the nineteen-nineties, many ski manufacturers used steel bars to make their molds, at a cost of as much as twenty thousand dollars, so they produced new designs only every few years. Today, with computer-aided milling machines, companies churn out new designs every few weeks, at a fraction of the former cost. It used to be that racers pushed the technology forward; now manufacturers wait for them to catch up.

Miller is an anomaly, McNichol said. "And you don't copy anomalies. You don't develop anomalies." Listening to him, though, I kept thinking of the myriad other advances in sports technology in recent years—and all the athletes forced to adapt or fall behind. New racquets, new balls, new helmets and skates, new dietary supplements and exercise equipment. It's no fluke, perhaps, that more than a few recent superstars—the Williams sisters, in tennis, for instance—have had unorthodox upbringings. Most athletes are last year's models, mass-produced and beautifully polished, yet already outdated when they reach the showroom. Anomalies may be exactly what's needed.

Early in the World Cup season, Miller's results seemed to bear this out. A month after his victory at Sölden, he won another giant slalom, in Park City, Utah, and was firmly in the lead for the over-all title. Then things began to go wrong. He missed a gate in the slalom at Park City and failed to finish three races in a row in Beaver Creek, Colorado. He finished fifty-second in the downhill at Val Gardena, Italy, flew off course in the giant slalom at Flachau, and straddled a gate in the slalom the next day. By early January, he had failed to finish seven of fourteen races and had slipped to tenth in the over-all standings.

Hermann Maier, meanwhile, went on a tear. He won the super-G at Lake Louise, in Alberta, Canada, and the downhill at Beaver Creek, leading an Austrian sweep. He was second in the super-G at Beaver Creek and third in the super-G at Val Gardena. When he was asked how his body was holding up, he said, "It's like the leg is sleeping. The nerves were cut there, and grow very slowly." He was "only thirty per cent of the skier" he once was. Still, that was enough to vault him to the top of the over-all standings by late November. As of last week, Austrian skiers held six of the top nine places, with Maier oscillating between first and third, poised to complete one of the greatest comebacks in the history of sport.

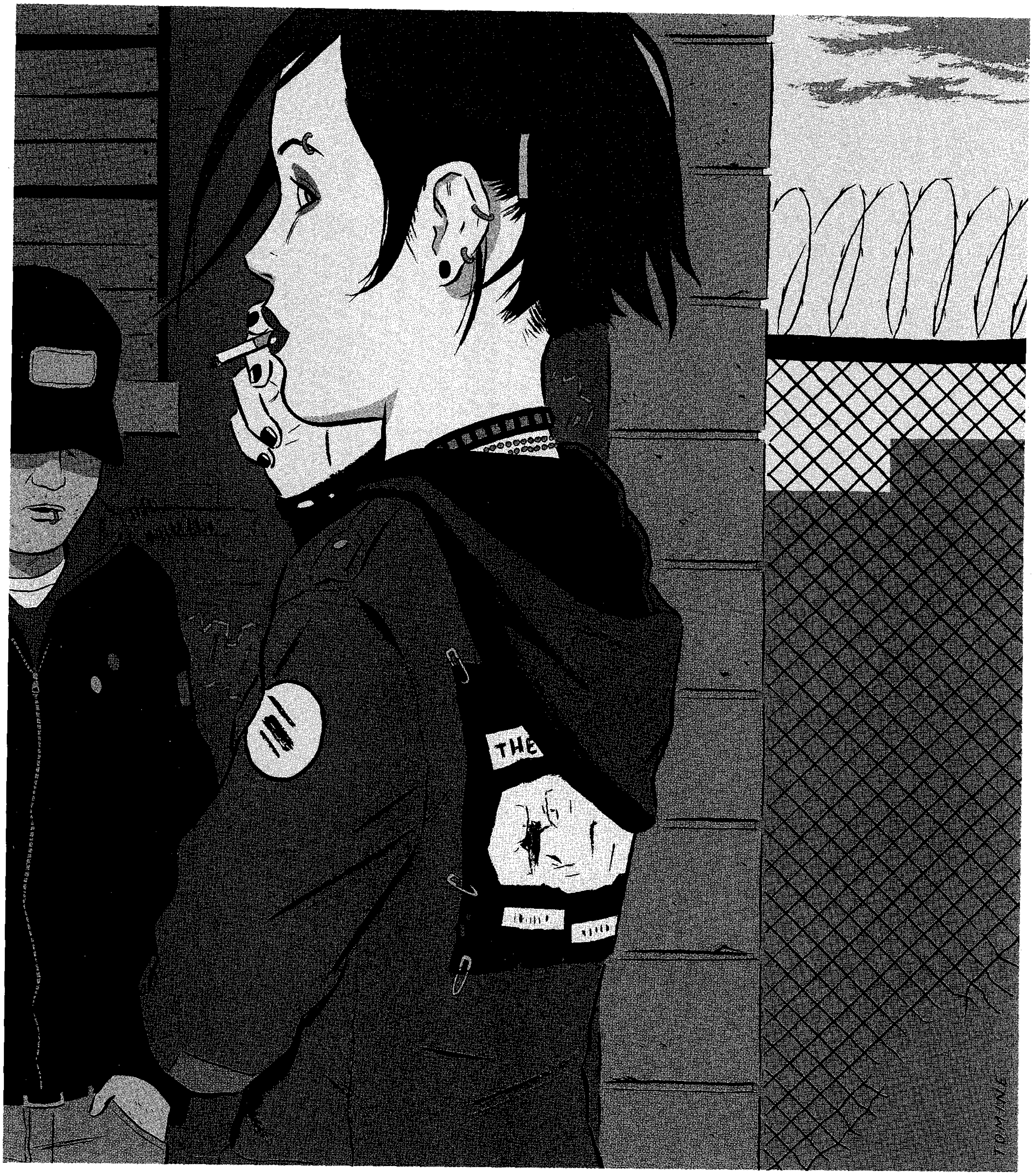
If ever a case could be made for the virtues of scientific training—for regimented workouts, textbook techniques, and grimly predictable results—this is the year. Yet Maier himself seems to have reached the opposite conclusion. "First, I have to have fun," he recently told a reporter from the *Guardian*. "Before I wanted everything done nearly like a machine. I wanted to be like a machine. Then I had this accident, this thing that made me more human . . . I feel no pressure at all now. I feel no pressure because I know it's nearly impossible to make a comeback from an accident like that. It really is nearly impossible."

In a season of improbable reverses, though, it may well be Miller who provides the final twist: last week, his luck turned yet again. After struggling with his slalom skis all season (the last time he scored points in a slalom was in South Korea, in March, 2003), he finished third in the slalom at Chamonix, France, and first in the combined slalom-downhill event. Suddenly, he was in fourth place over-all and only a victory or two from the lead. "You can't bet against him," McNichol had told me months earlier. "He will prove you wrong every time. I mean, the guy is so unencumbered, so pure—it's like he's plugged into the Matrix. He can go out there and lose fourteen slaloms in a row, and after the fourteenth he'll come back and say, 'Hey, coach, did you see that one turn I made?' And I'll say, 'Yeah, well, that was a good turn, but you still crashed.' And he'll say, 'Yeah, but did you see that turn? That was a *beautiful* turn.' " ♦

FICTION

# EMINENT DOMAIN

### BY ANTONYA NELSON



What caught Paolo’s attention was the smile, teeth extravagantly white and large, orthodontically flawless. Expensive maintenance in the mouth of a homeless girl. Around the smile was a pale, animated face, and around that a corona of wild purple hair. The owner of this gleeful mouth was drunk, her flame of a head swaying on the thin stick of her body, lit at nine in the morning on the front stoop of a condemned Baptist church.

This neighborhood was called “transitional.” The church was being destroyed to accommodate a new freeway, and a ramp jutted raggedly into the sky above it, a road to nowhere: eminent domain. Paolo drove past it on his way to the theatre for rehearsals. Every day, the girl balanced on the church steps, surrounded by a shifting group of men. Always the only female, and, as a result, the center of a kind of stunned, stoned, possessive attention. The group surveyed the street, drinking from brown-paper bags, leaning on bundles, panhandling with plastic cups, laughing too loudly, ready to attack anyone who made the mistake of approaching their girl. Some wore hospital wristbands. They adopted dogs and took better care of them than they did of themselves. They, too, were strays—unclaimed, uncollared, trotting purposefully through parking lots or along sidewalks, jauntily dodging danger, their only objective the next meal or drink and a place to lie down. When inspired, the group catcalled in the direction of traffic—provoked by an angry driver, a hand gesture or a shout, the look of fear or disgust on an elderly face, or the mere fact of a particularly ostentatious vehicle, like a Humvee or a Bentley. Other times, they collected aluminum cans in shopping carts. You’d see them paired off on recycling day, scrounging through the green bins left curbside. They were everywhere, like squirrels, Paolo thought, with routines, like mailmen. You could grow so accustomed to their presence that you stopped seeing them.

But Paolo felt he knew the girl. Her animation most likely had to do with being the only female and therefore the source of a kinetic sexual friction, not only among the men in her circle but among the men in the cars passing, and the ones wearing hard hats and safety vests, operating the raucous city equipment, erecting the freeway. She presided in the manner of a stripper before a paying audience. Still, Paolo stared with what he knew to be special interest, drawn by something about her that he alone perceived.

ADRIAN TOMINE

Then one day he knew what it was. He squealed to a halt in traffic. The street people looked over at the source of the sound with the lazy blinking regard of lizards. And there, showcased among them, was Bobby Gunn’s daughter. Sophie Gunn. A Houston River Oaks Country Club girl. Débutante, she should be, by now. Through the steamy window of his convertible Paolo took her in, the furthest thing from a débutante he could imagine, and she gazed upon him with a taunting expression that said she was high, protected, superior. Her glance said, *You fear me. You may even envy me.* Then her smile faltered. She stepped backward. Now she understood that she knew him—that he had ties to her past, that he might leap from his car and reveal her origins, reveal to her companions the fact that she was merely slumming, while they had no other options. Was that it—simply threat, exposure both here and to her parents? She and Paolo held the gaze, across traffic, through the windshield, as if time had gelled.

Then it jerked forward; horns blared all around him. Houston drivers were patient, to a point—their Southern manners, maybe the languor that humidity encouraged—and then they became just as surly as their counterparts in New York. He hadn’t been a driver in New York, and his skills were still rudimentary. He sometimes forgot that he was in charge of the car and drifted, foot ambivalent on the pedals. He lurched away now, suspecting that Sophie Gunn, having been recognized, wouldn’t hold court on the steps tomorrow.

Paolo was having a sort of secret affair with a patron of the arts who was forty-four, ten years older than him. “Sort of,” because it seemed that most people knew about it. Her husband, a heart surgeon, had been charged in a recent scandal at the hospital—a dull scandal having to do with billing, rather than botched surgery or drug trafficking—the details of which he’d kept from his wife. (It was the intern mistress, his new confidante, who would have to appear in court, and in the pages of the *Chronicle*, implicated.) Mary Annie was the name of the surgeon’s wife, who had now filed for divorce. She referred to herself as “well preserved,” which meant that she had streaked-blond hair and tennis-ball arm muscles, minimal wrinkles, and a snappy fashion sense. She’d grown up on a ranch in West Texas, where her larger-than-life father had pampered her in a peculiar way. In addition to the typical female functions, she had been expected to cultivate another set of assets: a bawdy, tolerant sense of humor, a whiskey voice, the ability to give the distinct and disarming impression that she knew your weaknesses and forgave you for them in advance. Intelligent by nature, she’d been a horse handler, a tea drinker, a student of nursing, and was now curious about the creative arts. But she was cautious in love, having been wounded by her husband, that coward, that man whom her father had enthusiastically offered to come shoot dead. Texans—they were a breed apart.

Paolo had been seated near Mary Annie at one of what he’d dubbed the Rubber Chicken Events. They came with the visiting-artist territory—fund-raising dinners with tables full of benefactors there to meet the talent. How many had he attended in his two years as actor-in-residence? For these affairs, he fortified himself with Scotch. Mary Annie had been sitting across from Paolo; when he was asked how he prepared for his roles as, well, such *lowlifes* (his calling was malfeasance, Iago the role he was rehearsing now), she had smiled into her plate. “Assholes are easy,” he’d responded. The dowagers and their husbands liked to be scandalized—it was part of what they bought, for a thousand dollars a plate. But the flinch in Mary Annie’s face brought Paolo up short; he hadn’t truly meant to offend.

“Allow me,” he said to her afterward, on the edge of the club portico, where they were waiting for their cars. Gallantly, he held his umbrella over her. She forgave him gracefully, leaning in too close, a woman accustomed to a man’s attention, and in need of it. Later, slowly, they’d become true intimates—not when she’d undressed for him, for the first time, in a hotel room, or when they’d kissed achingly in her driveway, but when, on the telephone this month, she’d confessed that she was puzzling over the problem of her daughter's pregnancy. She didn't want to be called Granny or Nana or any other fossilizing term of endearment. Then Paolo knew he'd genuinely been let in.

On the phone with Mary Annie, Paolo did not mention the girl on the church steps. Already he'd decided.

He might have first met Sophie Gunn at Mary Annie's house. At a function there—the girl brought along in a cotillion dance dress with a corsage, or perhaps the reluctant teen in an outfit of chains and denim. Whatever she'd been then, she had shed it now.

"You could give me a ride," Sophie had said to him there at the curb, after which she'd coughed ferociously, making a fist and hacking into it. He'd parked in front of the church and she'd stepped forward automatically, the representative of her crew, a pack of cigarettes squashed suggestively behind her metal-studded belt. He was glad to see that she hadn't been scared away by his recognition of her the day before. It was a sunny February afternoon; he had the top down, sunglasses on.

"Beg pardon?"

She repeated her request, pantomiming, pointing at him, then back at herself.

Knowing who she was, he should have delivered her straight to her parents' house. But he had never seen himself as a savior. He was an observer at best, a bad influence or an attractive nuisance at worst. A stringer-along. An actor, for God's sake—hungry for the disreputable, never denying the dark impulses.

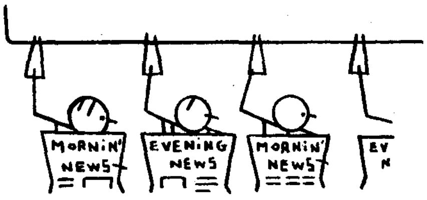
"Get in," he told her.

He took her to a Taco Cabana and bought her beans and rice and guacamole. She was a vegetarian, which made Paolo laugh. She joined him; it was as if the same silly slogans ran through their minds: *Sleep in the street, don't eat meat. Smoke pot, not pigs.* She still had her wits about her. How long would they last? She knew every customer at the restaurant and greeted them all extravagantly. She was indulged—the neighborhood had not yet turned its gentrifying back on her ilk. And she had not yet acquired the look of a derelict. Her skin was intact, mostly clean, exposed with utter randomness, her clothes held on with safety pins and zippers, tiny diamond in her nostril, rings in her brow, ears, and lip, ball bearing through the tongue. She wore a rivet-studded bracelet that Paolo was alarmed to recognize as a cock ring, and combat boots, which would probably never go out of style in certain contexts. Every few days, she told Paolo, she went to a high-school friend's house to watch television, take a shower, sit on a sofa. "And dye my hair," she added thoughtfully. The color was eggplant, tipped in jet black. Her vanity about it interested Paolo; some product had been used to make it flare up rather than lie limp. He stared for a long time at her beautifully smooth arms until he realized that she must have shaved them, and recently, to achieve the look.

He needed to know if she was eighteen yet—the wholeness of the number signified something—but she wouldn't say. He pretended not to know instantly what that meant.

Without asking, without promising, they struck a kind of bargain—the kind made between people who will eventually sleep together, whose business is mostly of the subterranean, unspoken variety—that he would not tell her parents where she was. Her father, Bobby Gunn, who had slid out of several investment and oil businesses just before they toppled, was the minorest of minor players in the latest rash of financial scandals. "Wily," Sophie said. "Daddy," she called him. Either it was an affectation (and it was charming) or, as a Southerner, she was unaware of the word's perverse disharmony. "Daddy," she said, as in "Daddy once called the police and had me arrested for pawning Mama's jewelry." She'd summoned the police to come get him, too; he'd beaten her when she set fire to the playroom—extinguished the blaze with the garden hose, then whipped her unrepentant grinning face with the metal nozzle. They went tit for tat in that household, apparently.

All Paolo could recall was Bobby Gunn's habit of muttering to himself. He'd tucked it away as a curiosity for future use in a character study. The under-your-breath aside, the meanness most people kept to themselves. "Fuck you," Sophie, too, had said, sotto voce, instead of "Thank you," as a girl her own age wearing a Taco Cabana paper hat disdainfully took her order.



"I used to Magic Marker 'I want to die' on my arms during tests if I hadn't studied. *Bada bing*—down to the counsellor's office," Sophie told him. She was providing him with tips for a kind of survival. She was entertaining him. She was trying to convey the personality that was uniquely her own—brattiness, joy, jokes, willfulness. The need to shock. "When I was a baby, I would bang my head on the floor until they gave me what I wanted." Paolo noted how tidily she ate, etiquette lessons still coursing through her system like the blood of a feline, fastidious and sexy.

"Didn't you use to ride horses?" Paolo said suddenly, an image returning to him like a forgotten dream.

"Yep," she responded. Bobby Gunn's daughter had been wearing jodhpurs when he met her. She'd stepped into a living-room party when all those present were lulled by liquor into a dreamy observation of her garments, the strange and striking uniform, part English Regency, part Vegas showgirl, the boots, the helmet, and—especially—the crop. She'd been teen-age, scornful, eyebrows arched, lips twitching as if to hold back a derisive snort. She'd had a knowingness, a skepticism—a fringe-factor affiliation that Paolo shared—remarkable enough to allow him to recognize her otherwise unrecognizable self on the steps of the torched Baptist church. Without it, he wouldn't have been able to unearth her in that smile. He wouldn't have found himself thinking about her in the circle of men, the liquid movement of her hips and hands.

"Aren't you supposed to be in school?" Stupid, stupid, stupid, he instantly berated himself. But she wasn't listening. She was expanding her eyes as if to hypnotize him.

She leaned across the lunch debris. "What would you pay me to suck you off?"

"What?"

"Not what, how much? *Cuánto*?"

"I wouldn't, at any price." Paolo hated the heat that suffused his face, the repulsion that accompanied it. Hadn't he just been considering her flesh in full possession of unclean thoughts? Her confidence wasn't complete, he told himself; she was trying on vulgarity, rather than genuinely inhabiting it. "But I'll lend you money."

"But I can't pay you back, so I have to do something for it. I have to earn it."

"It can be a long-term loan. In ten years, it'll come due."

"I'll be dead," she said breezily. "Daddy says that all debts are forgiven in death." She took twenty dollars. "I won't buy drugs," she promised, bored, anticipating his next stupid statement. She withdrew a foil-wrapped stick of chewing gum from the pocket of her jeans and poked it into her mouth. When Paolo delivered her to a tattoo parlor a mile away, she gave him a kiss on the cheek that left a small minty tingle.

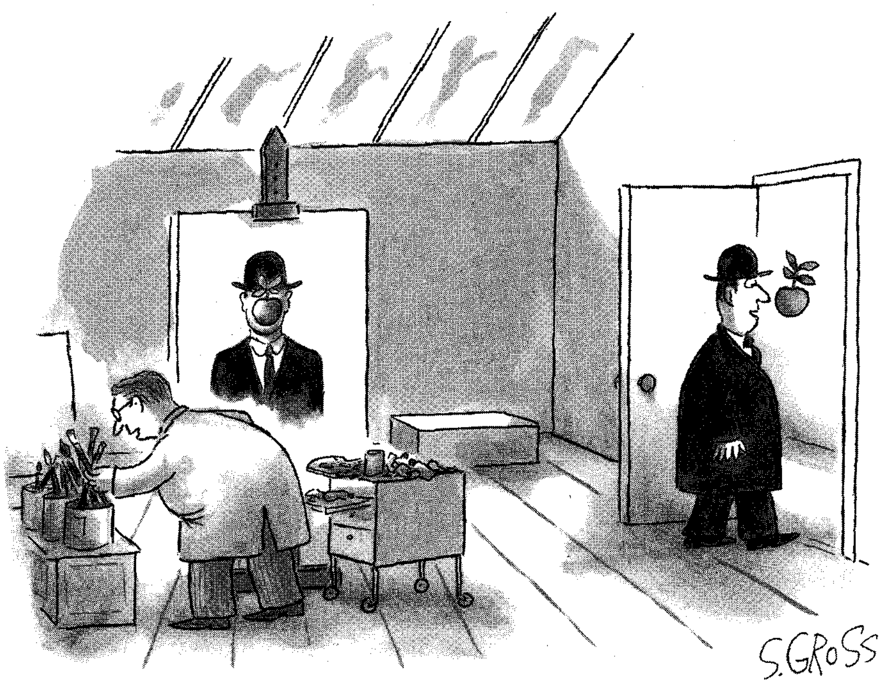
He didn't see her for a week, although he looked. Had his twenty dollars bought her oblivion? Then there she was, outside the Starbucks he sometimes frequented. He locked his convertible with his usual qualms; anyone with a knife—screwdriver, ballpoint pen, sharp fingernail—could hack through the roof.

"What are you up to?" he asked nonchalantly, hugely relieved to see her.

"You can't believe how nervous people get when you walk into their place of business carrying one of these." She brandished a red plastic gasoline container like a lunchbox.

"Well, yes," Paolo agreed.

Over coffee—she ordered a large sweet beverage full of cream and caramel, a kid's concept of coffee, consumed with a spoon—she proposed a few favors that he might perform for her. Her cohorts in the world of the disenfranchised, while often fun and generally supportive, couldn't render all required aid. Listening, Paolo was already justifying his attraction to her. He would save her, he told himself as he nodded along. Surely he was better for her than the boys she was currently hanging around with. Boys? Men. More adept at the traditional manly functions than Paolo was. Fighters, hunters, gatherers—after a fashion. Addicts, scroungers, streetwise. Paolo wouldn't last a day in that odd cosmos. He was a pampered dilettante, supported by the gifts of women who were bored and eager for a cause. Sophie could be his cause as he was theirs. He wasn't so different from those do-gooders, he thought, discreetly nudging the gasoline container beneath the table. He was old enough to be her father, more or less. But only if he'd fathered her when he was in high school, he told himself. And that helped.


"Same time tomorrow."

• •

"This is a school day, right?" she asked suddenly.

"Thursday," he said. "No, Wednesday."

She sent him into her private school to clean out her locker, abandoned several months ago but still full of stuff.

"My parents are afraid to disenroll me," Sophie explained. "It's too hard to get back in—you sign up for this shithole, like, in utero—so instead they just put me *on leave*." She pronounced the last words like a phrase in French.

The woman at the attendance desk did not blanch; she sent Paolo with a box and a prissy aide, who made a point of looking away when the locker door swung open to reveal its decoration of broken mirrors and slashed photographs, everything held in place with duct tape. Paolo had the feeling that much of what he removed from the locker did not actually belong to Sophie.

He was sweating by the time it was over, unnerved in a specifically immature way. This was the business of adolescence. What was he thinking? An alarm was sounding, he believed, alerting all parents and law-abiding citizens.

He could hear his stereo, practically see the little car throbbing, as he hustled across the parking lot. Sophie snapped the radio off before he could complain, greeting him with "No one in that building has ever set foot in a public school." And, anticipating his next remark, she added, "Including the janitor."

"Nuh-uh."

"Uh-huh," she hummed confidently. Her locker made her seem more deeply disturbed than Paolo had thought. She was a liar, a thief, a beautiful, broken, fathomless girl. She had acne in her eyebrows, which were still blond. When he handed over the locker's contents, she immediately began to separate the salable from the personal.

"Tell me your name," she said as they drove away from the scene of the crime.

"Paul," he said automatically, reverting to the lie. He was legitimately Paolo, but as a child in Milwaukee he'd adopted Paul for use in school and on the street. His mother had given him his name; from her he'd also acquired the habit of crossing his fingers, knocking on wood, making wishes, and looking for portents. On his forehead was the same worried V, entrenched between the eyes. The night his mother died, he'd seen not only a star in the smeary Houston sky but a falling one.

"You're cool, Paul," Sophie Gunn said, thanking him. At the church steps, she took her box of goods and waved goodbye.

Like a kind of church functionary,

he'd fed her, he'd listened without judgment, he'd given her money. What more could he do?

At home, in his guesthouse apartment, he took advantage of the rare sunny afternoon to lie outside and tan, gauging his moral temperature. Would he have attached himself to a runaway boy? To an ugly girl? What did he have in mind? Below, in the back yard of the main house, a pool shimmered. Once it had been for swimming, but not anymore. It had been altered by its current owners, Paolo's hosts, who had filled it with concrete except for the top eighteen inches or so: a giant shallow pool that attracted clouds of mosquitoes and wandering rodents. The atmosphere was insidious, suggestive. He drank beer as the sky turned city pink.

His hosts, Clem and Sheila, were also patrons of the arts; his quarters came to him free of charge. Yet there was a cost—his privacy. A steep price, actually, all things considered. But not one he'd thought much about until he had something to hide. He assessed it now as he acknowledged his desire to bring Sophie here, to give her a place to sleep for the night. His thinking took him no further than seeing her safely on his futon, beneath a spare bedsheet, wearing a pair of his soft shorts. He understood that from now on he would be the owner of a small gnawing anxiety with her name attached to it—an irritation that only her living presence would soothe.

In a little while, his hosts would be home from work, standing on their deck, waving at him with drinks in their hands, the way they did every evening—beaming at their pet.

It seemed wise to fill her Ritalin prescription for her, picking it up from the safety of the Walgreen's drivethrough, his eyes skidding wildly for spies in the parking lot. Her plan charged her twenty dollars a month for her supply. It kept her from losing focus, she told him. It interacted well with cigarettes, marijuana, alcohol. Not so well with cocaine or Ecstasy. He took this information in without expression. "And I can always sell a few of them," she added. "Some people think it's a trip."

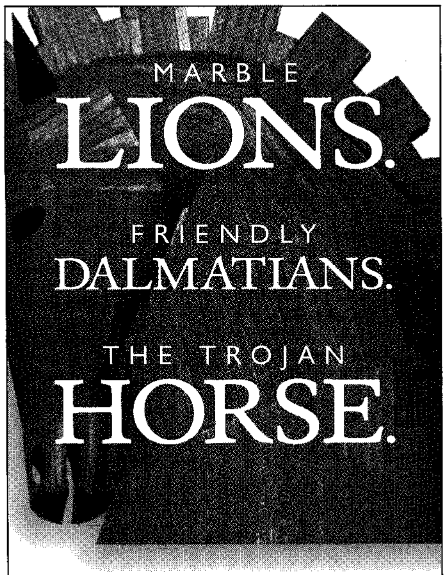
On a weekly basis he delivered her to therapy, in a building without windows. The office was for the indigent; there wasn't even a parking lot beside it, just an open door and a steady stream of runaways and the homeless, people who endured an hour of questions in order to recline on a padded chaise in refrigerated air. Sophie enjoyed her doctor, an idealistic young man who had run away himself and suffered a kind of free-floating angst having to do with entitlement and disillusion. Outside, sweating in his car, Paolo had several less than noble thoughts on the topic of Sophie's therapy. For instance, was the doctor attracted to her? And, if so, was Sophie mutually inclined? Was Paolo perhaps a subject of conversation? He didn't inquire; she didn't reveal.

He, like the therapist, was careful never to seem like a probing parent, never to scold her for being high, for endangering herself, for eluding her mother and father. If she weren't doing those very things—if she were still a senior at St. James High, living in her wallpapered girlhood bedroom, preparing now for the prom—he wouldn't be with her at all. There would be no virtue in seducing her as her parents' child, only reproach and judgment, banishment. Instead, he enjoyed the luxury of being better than the alternative—those filthy men who slept in the bayou and ate out of Dumpsters. The oddest of them actually had horns—a stump on each side of his forehead, surgically installed. A man whose ambition was to become a troll. Paolo was preferable, by far, to him; at least, this was the ongoing imaginary argument he made to Sophie's parents.

Whenever they parted, she kissed him. First it had been on the cheek; now it was on the mouth. What, he asked himself, would her tongue stud feel like, slipped between his teeth?

During rehearsals, he imagined her observing him from the depths of the dark auditorium, her funky shoes hoisted onto the seat in front of her, the bullshit-detecting gaze levelled his way, and he found himself performing for her skeptical expectation, working to prove himself to her. "You were on fire," his director said, praising him, and Paolo, still spellbound by the thought of Sophie, waved the compliment away.

Her name came up by accident with Mary Annie. Paolo's blood surged—in his face, his heart, his groin. They were vacuuming Mary Annie's S.U.V. at a self-service car wash, sucking up the Irish-setter hair. Above the noise of the suction, she mentioned that the Gunns had been



Kingdoms of Gods & Doges
Turkey, Greece, Croatia, Italy
To find out more about Swan Hellenic's enriching, award-winning, worldwide discovery cruises, contact your travel agent, visit swanhellenic.com or call 1-877-800-SWAN.
SWAN HELLENIC
DISCOVERY CRUISING
NEVER DRY.

Blazer Sale
Blazers for ladies and gentlemen
15 colors. All sizes.
Were $165, Now $115
Hunter and Coggins
1-800-343-9396
hunterandcoggins.com

Give the Gift of Music at the Smithsonian!
Musical Weekend in Washington
May 4-7, 2004
Call for brochure: (202) 633-4174
www.si.edu/fom/weekend.htm

French & Italian Holiday Rentals
Live like a European in your own chateau, villa or farmhouse. Weekly rentals. Most regions.
Call (510)559-8080 or write
2124 Kittredge St, #200, Berkeley, CA 94704
www.villeetvillage.com
VILLE ET VILLAGE®

Stone Soup
The Literary Magazine by Children
A perfect gift to inspire creativity
$33/yr (6 issues) · 800-447-4569
www.stonesoup.com
"The New Yorker of the 8–13 set" –Ms.

through three different private investigators before deciding that Sophie must have left the city. She and the Gunns were social acquaintances, on many of the same boards, and members of the same country club. The older Gunn daughter had gone to school with Mary Annie's girl, Meredith. The families weren't close, but the gossip of their lives circulated through the ranks. There was a lot of support in the system. Mary Annie was stretched across the carpeted cargo cabin, jamming the nozzle of the machine into the crevices, when she said, "I really feel for the Gunns. These kids are like terrorists. They hold their families hostage, basically. They make threats, they break negotiating promises, they aren't afraid of the occasional suicide bombing. Tell me how they're different from the other people we've declared terrorists."

Paolo had no answer. Mary Annie supplied her own, sighing as the machine abruptly ceased. "We love them," she said. "That's the problem." Her eyes were moist. Her own daughter, the one who was due to deliver Mary Annie's first grandchild in three months, had been a wild girl. She'd had to go survive in a camp in Utah for a few weeks, detoxing on a clifftop, rappelling and rafting and eating nuts and berries around a campfire with a bunch of other druggies. The cost of such restoration was astronomical. "If they could find Sophie, they could take her there. You can even pay someone to transport her," Mary Annie said.

"Sounds harsh," Paolo said.

She blinked up at him, slamming the hatchback door of the S.U.V. "Teen-agers steal years off your life," she said. "The stress gave me an esophageal disorder. I still can't use ziplock bags without thinking of Mere's backpack full of them."

"But she came through O.K.," Paolo said, nearly pleading. "She's fine, right? Husband? Baby?"

Mary Annie used two cupped hands to push back her hair and reattach a silver barrette held between her teeth. "Maybe. But my marriage started to go downhill because Tad and I couldn't agree on what to do about her during those years. We took out all our anger at Meredith on each other. We went at it like tigers. It's terrible to care for someone more than she cares for herself."

Mary Annie's words, these last ones, ran like a banner through Paolo's mind. He did not think he'd felt that way before, and it alarmed him to realize that it might be true of his affection for Sophie.

"Did you know that your mom and dad hired private eyes?" he asked the girl later.

This news surprised her, which was gratifying. Very little surprised her. "How hard could it be?" she asked. "Here I am."

"The point is they're looking."

"They're doing a piss-poor job," she said, spreading her arms on the church steps. "Anyone who wants can see me."

But that wasn't quite the case; she didn't look like her old self. His recognition of her hadn't been the same as a parent's. What they were looking for was dated, buried deep.

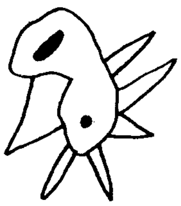
Paolo bought her a cell phone, because she'd thrown hers away after the battery had run down; also, her parents had known the number and filled the voice mail. He purchased two chargers and kept one in his car cigarette lighter for her to use as they cruised the sultry city in the comfort of air-conditioning and stereo sound. A few times, Paolo panicked because the phone was on his plan, a cheaper alternative but an implicating one, should, say, the unit be found on her dead body. He tried hard not to imagine her body dead, dead instead of slouched in his passenger seat, taking calls in a savage secret fashion.

He fed her. He compromised, buying her cigarettes but not liquor. He considered it progress when she allowed him to see her on a weekend night, because that was when the clubs were busiest, when the kids she knew from St. James sneaked out into the dark. Paolo had once looked forward to weekends, but not anymore. All the worst things happened then. The weekends were when Mary Annie's soon-to-be ex-husband was most likely to be pulled from sleep for an emergency transplant; the organ donors died then, on weekends and during holidays. One family's tragedy led to another's miracle; they might meet in heart-wrenching scenes in the hospital lounges and waiting rooms. Less and less often, Paolo took Mary Annie up on her offer for company during those nights when her husband was called away. As he sat with her—at restaurants, concerts, movies, between the sheets of her very comfortable bed—he resented Sophie's power. And why had he given it to her, anyway? The girl had ruined Paolo's nascent love for Mary Annie, eclipsed her elder easily, without even trying.

"Hey, tough girl, don't you worry about getting busted?" Paolo said peevishly as Sophie lit a small metal pipe in his front seat. She never asked permission. "And, if not for yourself, at least think of me, the adult driver." He hated to feel so threatened by rule-makers. What had become of his own question-authority, fuck-you attitude?

"I was already arrested," she said, as if the event were like a baptism or an inoculation, singular and prophylactic, thereby making her exempt. "Dude, it's so funny." She'd been caught smoking hash in the bayou one night. The cop had cuffed her and dragged her to the downtown station, where he threw her in a cell. She phoned home and reached her father, who, on his outraged way across town, was himself stopped for D.U.I. and resisting arrest. He wasn't allowed to drive her home, so her mother had to be called. But her mother was too sedated on pills to answer the phone, and her father was too embarrassed to call one of his friends, so they ended up calling a cousin, Mina. "Mina's a total fuckup, so we figured she wouldn't tell the rest of the family. It was our secret, me and Daddy's. We didn't fight for a while after that," Sophie finished a little nostalgically.

"That's some family you've got there," Paolo said, as she abruptly opened the passenger window and rapped the pipe on the exterior of the car, where Paolo would later find a ding. Instead of dropping her off in front of the church, he suggested a long ride around the city's loop. Sophie took the opportunity to curl up against the headrest and take a nap, her hands in fists at her chin. Mouth partially open, eyes closed, she could have been ten or twelve years old, an ordinary pretty child. That she so wholly trusted him made Paolo afraid; what if he was not who he—and, presumably, she—believed he was?



In April, when "Othello" opened, he gave Sophie a ticket. Like a high-school boy, he waited for her to materialize in the audience, in the seat he'd designated—to be for real where he'd installed her in his imagination for months. And, as he had been in high school, where high hopes wage war with low expectations, he was simultaneously disappointed and validated: no girl, no adulation, no fantasy fulfilled.

It was hard not to be churlish, then, a week later, when he received her desperate call. She phoned him from a McDonald's on Westheimer. "I feel hot," she said—not passionately but listlessly. When he picked her up, her forehead burned beneath his wrist, though he had no notion what he was checking for—it was just another of his mother's gestures. In the driveway of the guesthouse, he ascertained the absence of Clem and Sheila before hurrying Sophie up the rickety steps, following her lurching bottom, the painful pinch of her flesh as it met her metal belt. Once indoors, he drew the shades and opened the oven door to provide mood lighting, hiding inside his own home. She lay on the futon with a wet compress on her head, three aspirin and a slug of whiskey for her cold symptoms, bare dirty feet splayed.

"I can't sleep," she said. "It's been two days, and I just can't fucking sleep!"

"What did you take?" Paolo asked.

"Nothing," she claimed. But later revised—a few unknown things, not much, nothing new, that was for sure, and far less than usual. He was afraid to ask her to change her clothing, though it didn't smell fresh; the sheets wouldn't conform to the bed, slipping off under her twitching need to be constantly realigned. At the sink he took a hammer to a bundle of ice cubes, turning them into something palatable and cool for her, shards of slippery water passed from his trembling hand to her pink tongue. He thrilled sickeningly as she closed her lips around his fingers. He promised himself that if she showed just one sign of hallucination or seizure he'd rush her to the E.R.

"My mind is racing," she said. "I just can't relax." The fact that despite her exhaustion she could not let go of consciousness made her cry. Paolo knew the feeling. He sat beside her on the futon.

"When I was young," he said, remembering it as he spoke, "my mother used to do this thing." He cleared his throat, lifted his voice, trying on his mother's cigarette-tinged steadiness, her words like a rich note sustained on a saxophone. "Imagine lying in a field," he began. "A field of grass, the ground below your head and hands, and the sky above. A little wind, the sound of"—he improvised—"wind chimes." (Sheila's were tinkling faintly from the yard.) "You think you're relaxed, lying in your field, but not yet you aren't. Squeeze your toes, squeeze and squeeze, and then let them go, just let them go. They might feel like they want to float. . . ." The ankles, the thighs, the hip bones, the clavicle. Up the body he went, from toes to knees to ribs to face. Paolo's breathing slowed as he took Sophie through the incantation. He had been his mother's youngest child, her only boy, his three older sisters wild girls who disappeared laughing into the night, leaving Paolo and their worried mother to wait for them at home. When he couldn't sleep, when his vivid imagination plagued him, waking nightmares flashing before his closed eyes in a fearsome beating pattern, he called for his mother, who sat beside him and summoned the field of grass, the easy breeze, drifting clouds, sunshine, sleep.

"Whattarya, Yoga Man?" Sophie said, a smile in her voice, but she obeyed his commands to clench and release, seize and relinquish. Calm overtook them both. The oven light flickered. A distant siren cried. And, finally, she slept, her fists as usual near her chin, her limbs still randomly twitching, the drugs firing and ricocheting inside her, despite her essential absence. Paolo breathed as deeply as his guest, more peaceful than he'd been in months. Either it was the certainty of her safety, here with him behind the locked guesthouse door, or it was his dead mother's sudden presence.

"Let him have it," she said later, from inside a dream. "He can have it, I don't want it." She followed through with a dismissive swipe of her hand, which flopped off the futon and onto the floor.

While he waited for morning—for light, for the disappearance of fever, for whatever shift toward optimism was going to occur—he turned the radio to a jazz station and watched the shimmering pool beneath his window. When Clem and Sheila came home, their lights went on, turning the house into a doll house, its bulbs flaring and extinguishing, revealing their ritual movements, the absent-minded passage through doors and halls, objects shifted from one room to another, keys, mail, laundry, a glass of water, the ascent from downstairs to up. Would his life ever resemble that life? House, pool, wife, routine? This guesthouse had been designed for visits from their children, those eventual adults, for the implicitly promised grandchildren.

When Sophie rolled to the far side of the futon and fell into a heavier, unromantic sleep, Paolo shut the oven door, lowered the radio's volume to a vague hum, and removed his outer layer of clothes. Wearing boxer shorts and a T-shirt, he carefully positioned himself beside her. Her back was turned to him, her hand now on her hip. He rested his head beside her pillow, shaping himself to complement her shape, breathing in the complicated odor of her head—hair product, smoke, sweat, something metallic, perhaps from her various piercing hardware. He lay for a long time inching his hand toward hers, finally covering it, as it made a fist in his grip. She arched herself backward against him automatically, her reflex one of welcome rather than repulsion, an attraction to the source of heat. And for a second Paolo, reacting without thinking, pressed his instant erection along the seam of her pants, its tip creased painfully by her studded belt. If he'd closed his eyes and let himself pretend, he could have followed through, could have told himself that she'd done much more with many worse, and later she most likely wouldn't even remember. Instead, he turned over, planting a friendly backside against hers. His eyes were wide and he was aware of blinking them, yet soon enough he returned to the grassy field they both inhabited, watching the clouds and drifting with her by his side.

In the morning, she was gone. He could have dreamed the evening, for all the evidence he had of it. After trying her cell phone—"Hey, muthafucka, leemee a messsssssage"—he drove to the church, but it was an act of hope rather than reason. Now he was like her parents, he thought, seeking her at a disadvantage, lagging two steps behind, berating himself for having let her slip, literally, through his fingers.

"Where's our friend?" he shouted to the troll, who did a kind of "You talking to me?" routine before he limped reluctantly to Paolo's vehicle and scowled in at him. "Our friend Sophie," Paolo clarified. The man's forehead sprouted two inch-high protrusions, each of which, though bluish in color, clearly had veins of blood circulating just under the tight thin skin. "Wow," Paolo added, unable not to comment. Without thinking, he touched his own forehead. Though Sophie had patiently told him the names of all her comrades, Paolo had instead assigned them nicknames—the troll, the rooster, the slag heap, Mr. Natural. Others were moving slowly toward his car. If they decided that it was he, Paolo, who was responsible for Sophie's disappearance, what might they do to him?

"Fuck off, man," the rooster said. He was older than Paolo had realized, a tense man with a bright-orange Mohawk razored straight up the middle of his head. Tattoos crawled up from his shirt collar. When he walked along Montrose, he swung a car antenna in front of him as if bushwhacking. He and the troll and half a dozen others had now virtually surrounded Paolo's little convertible. Someone put an anchoring foot on the rear bumper, creating an ominous sag.

"How's it going?" Paolo said to the group, looking for allies. "You guys seen Sophie? Purple hair?"

"Last we saw, she was with you, Miata," someone said. So they had named him, too. Well, it was only fair. The rooster reached into his pocket, and Paolo flinched, fearing a gun or a knife. Instead, he pulled out a cell phone. "You the one calling?" Paolo stared at Sophie's phone. " 'Cause she asked me to take her calls." He put the little device to his cheek. "Hold, please."

"Where is she?" Paolo asked. But none of them were saying. He felt as if he'd been sent back to elementary school, to a circle of taunting children who did not play by grownups' rules. If he got out of the car and grabbed for the phone, they would toss it among themselves. Abruptly he popped the car into gear, shooting out from under the foot on his bumper.

Why this urgency, he asked himself, shifting to third, then fourth gear. Before, he'd gone days and weeks without seeing her. Yet he felt that he had to share with her one important fact: *I didn't do anything*, he would say. *I was good. Nothing happened.*

A few weeks later, at the end of Paolo's time in Houston, late one night after the last of his going-away parties, she called him and said, slurring, "Hey, I'm in jail?" His had been the only number stored in her cell phone—he'd programmed it himself when he bought it. While it was in the hands of the gang, he'd received a few accidental calls, shouting and singing and odd bits of street noise coming over the line.

He dressed among the boxes that held his belongings. But, before he left the apartment, she phoned again, to tell him that she'd been mistaken: hospital, not jail.

She'd been picked up riding the bus, passed out and in possession of some controlled substances that had poured from her pockets. After she'd ridden the route twice, the bus driver had delivered her to the downtown station, where she'd been thrown into a cell before fully waking. She'd refused to tell them who she was. Her school photo, Paolo assumed, the one her parents had submitted to the cops when she ran away, looked nothing like her.

Someone or something—a fight, a fall—had knocked out one of her top front teeth. Her eyebrow had bled, probably because a ring had been torn from it, but the amount of blood, its flow over her face, had made her captors nervous enough to send her to the emergency room rather than keep her at the jail. And this is where Paolo drove, at four-thirty in the humid May morning, to retrieve her.

"Paul," she said. "You aren't wearing gloves."

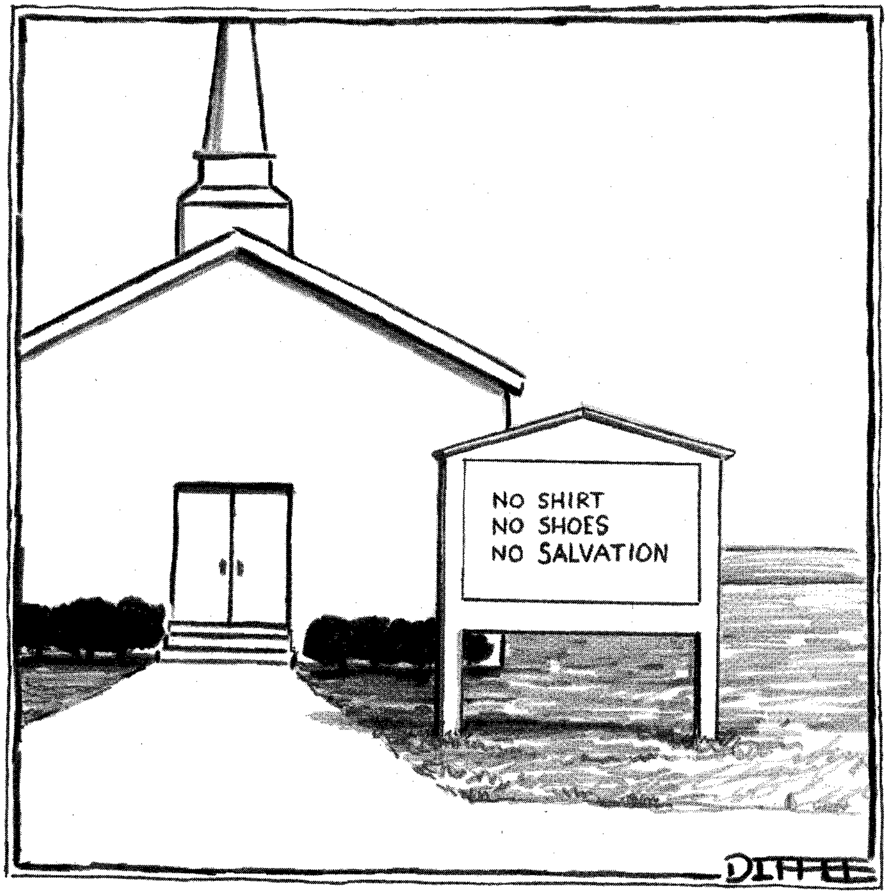
In the grim green light of the basement hallway, he looked at his hands, as if he'd forgotten what was or wasn't on them. "Why would I be wearing gloves?"

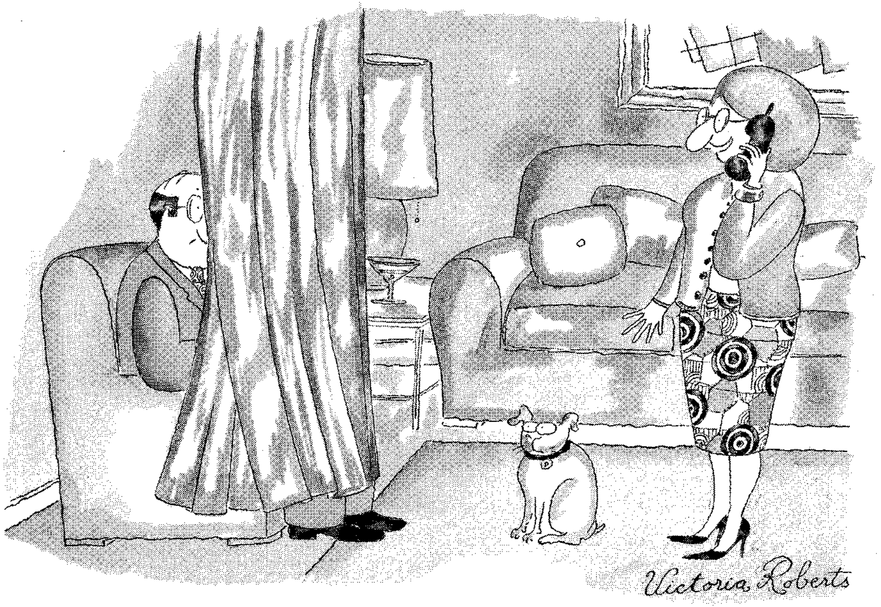
"The others did." In addition to her slur, she had a vague lisp. Her inability to stand up frightened him. The orderlies found nothing new or interesting in their situation; Paolo was allowed to sit beside her in the busy hallway as paperwork was undertaken. She wore two thin hospital gowns and an I.D. bracelet that named her Jane Doe.

"You have to say who you are," he told her.

"No."

"Then I will. Sophie Gunn," he told a





*"Howard's fine—I've had him curtained off."*

• •

passing uniformed cop. "She's a runaway."

Just like that, he saw, he had joined the other side, turned into an adult. He hadn't felt such relief since a visit to a church confession box, twenty years earlier.

"I'm eighteen," she lisped. "On May 1st, I was eighteen. May Queen," she added, smiling raggedly.

The cop waited for the two of them to get their stories straight. Being eighteen meant that the parents wouldn't be notified but that the possession charge would be transferred from juvenile to regular court. And then if she wasn't indigent there was this emergency-room bill to reconcile.

Sophie started to gag. Both men shifted away instantly; she covered her mouth and staggered toward the women's room. Paolo and the cop watched her disappear behind the door. "Her father's Bobby Gunn," Paolo said. "I'll phone him if you can't."

"If she's eighteen, she doesn't need her daddy."

In the end, it was Mary Annie whom Paolo phoned. The Gunns, naturally, were not listed. She answered unsurprised—she was expecting a call from the hospital, to tell her that her grandchild had been born.

"It's me," Paolo said. "I'm with Sophie Gunn." His explanation was brief, uninspired, suspect, no doubt, but he was too tired to embellish, too close to leaving Houston to really care what Mary Annie thought of him. Maybe that was another grown-up trait—not caring. She found the Gunns' phone number and wished him luck. It took a lot of rings to rouse them. Their expectation of hearing from their daughter had apparently waned.

"Wha'?" her father, the mumbler, said.

"I've got your daughter," Paolo said. "She's with me."

But this wasn't true, after all. For she had not returned to her seat beside Paolo after running to the rest room. The officer came back, a sheaf of papers in hand, calling her name as he passed through the hallway of the bleeding and bandaged. "Gunn," he said, in time to his heavy echoing footsteps, "Gunn. Gunn. Gunn?"

There was a time, earlier in the strange relationship that Paolo had with Sophie Gunn, when he should have given her up, turned her in, ended his role in a questionable business. This was at one of the ubiquitous fund-raisers, not a Rubber Chicken (sit-down) dinner but a cheesecube, stuffed-mushroom (standup) affair. At this party, Paolo was paying careful attention to the Gunns—Mrs. Gunn, whose smile clearly pained her, its hollowness owing no doubt to her anxiety about her daughter, and Bobby, who had a talent for attracting people in a circle around him. The others leaned in, scowling, to make out his murmuring anecdotes. Paolo found a place on the edge of the crowd, listening, holding a wineglass like a mask before his face. Bobby Gunn, having reached a few too many times for the champagne that floated by on the caterers' trays and not often enough for the hors d'oeuvres also circulating, was discussing his missing daughter. In the gathering of glamorously dressed friends, parents themselves of teen-agers and young marrieds, he told the story of his heartbreak: the all-star-equestrian, straight-A-student daughter who ran away, got into drugs, was lost to him on the streets. Paolo flushed, longing for the strength either to walk away or to confess.

"Teen-age girls are the canaries in the coal mine," one of the party guests posited. "We think they're so hard to live with, and yet just think how hard it must be to *be* them."

"Just think," another listener agreed drolly, a former beauty in late middle age. What she wouldn't do, Paolo thought, to be seventeen again.

"It's the boys who drive up your car insurance," a father said.

"Still, they're easier than the girls."

Such was the conventional wisdom concerning delinquency, youth: the wildness that hadn't yet been harnessed, the bad habits still blatant, the obsessions and addictions that might in the future be channelled, put to good, or at least profitable, use. Paolo distinctly felt his place in both worlds, the young and the old, and yet felt committed to belonging to neither. Now the crowd began offering its own evidence. Teen-age girls: This one had stolen her grandmother's silver. That one had driven a car into the swimming pool. Another had left the children she was babysitting to go to the liquor store with her boyfriend. Or she'd let the children watch as she screwed the boyfriend, sex ed in the family room. She'd leaped off a roof. She'd run naked through the mall. She'd set up an Internet porn site featuring herself and her sisters. She'd said to her mother, each and every day, "Die, you psycho cunt!" These girls. They were presented like poker hands, each one upping the ante.

But Bobby Gunn raised his voice above the general din. His story was not over.

Apparently he was offering advice—solace? warning?—to one of the circle of listeners, a newcomer, the father of an eleven-year-old girl, who was just now entering this rocky terrain. The man had bowed his head, and Bobby Gunn reached out a hand to pat his shoulder. "You've done all you can do," he said with certainty. "Sometimes it just comes down to luck. We got unlucky with ours. The worst thing you can imagine just keeps getting worse. You find yourself doing and saying the most unlikely things." And now he related, in his increasingly choked voice, the rest of the story. His daughter had not only disappeared; she had been incarcerated. While there, in psychiatric care, she'd hanged herself.

Paolo gasped, his heart seized, his body believing the story even as his mind swiftly contradicted it. *What?* Sophie had been lounging on her stoop that very morning, no better than yesterday, true, but certainly no worse. Incarceration? Why, he must mean the hash-smoking incident, with his own D.U.I. to complicate the matter. Was Gunn using Sophie to elicit pity? And how, exactly, did he think he could get away with it? These people had been babysitting and hiring and marrying and nominating and showering and cuckolding and roasting and eulogizing one another for generations; anyone other than the newcomer in the small circle would immediately recognize this as a lie.

"Laurel," Bobby Gunn said then, swilling the last of his drink. The circle of friends bowed their heads. And in the time it took to inhale a single breath Paolo remembered that there had been another daughter. Sophie's older sister. His mind stumbled into chaotic synch with his heart.

This was what should have forced him to end his secret life with Sophie. To retrieve his silly car from the valet service and drive three miles east to the scary rubble of the transitional side of town and pull the girl out of it, drag her by force, by the nape of her neck, into this clubhouse. It should have impelled him to act. But it didn't.

Paolo had been back in New York for almost a year when he heard about Sophie's marriage. Mary Annie sent him the *Chronicle* picture of the girl and her fiancé, the two of them no different from any of the other photographed couples, sitting in an arbor in the usual costumes, his hands on her shoulders. Paolo didn't spot her when he first scanned the page, looking for that trademark smile. But the unremarkability of the image was, of course, what made it remarkable. Her hair—could it be a wig? Surely all the king's hairdressers wouldn't have been able to tame that nest of singed straw and dye, or grow it out so hastily to the blond coif she now wore. There were no visible punctures in her eyebrows or nose or the tops of her ears. Airbrushing? Or had she simply healed that quickly? Credit the resilience of youth? He stared at the photo, oblivious of the fiancé, whose hands bore no tattoos, whose brown hair swept over a forehead that might still be spotted with pimples but certainly didn't sprout horns. That person was inconsequential to Paolo. And Paolo realized that he himself was as inconsequential to Sophie as any other Houstonian who happened to page through the Lifestyle section that Sunday morning.

Then Paolo gazed into Sophie's clear, smart eyes until he finally saw what he had missed: this girl had prevailed. Her triumph was in the tilt of her chin, in the provocative parting of her lips, behind which lay the promise of that stunning naughty smile, the knocked-out tooth that would, of course, have been repaired. All along he'd misunderstood the role she was playing, the drama she was enacting. The story he'd been constructing for himself when he was with her—that intense period during which he wasn't turning her in to her parents or to the authorities, the extent of what he'd considered his moral quandary and journey—had been another story altogether; Sophie had been fashioning it for herself and for her mother and her father, for their well-intentioned, grieving friends, for her own friends still in school, and, most significantly, for the memory of her sister. *I have survived*, she had concluded the tale—the victor. Paolo wondered if others understood the amazing and unlikely thing Sophie had done, the treacherous gauntlet she'd run and come through intact.

This same newspaper had announced the arrival of Mary Annie's first grandchild early the summer before, a little girl, named something fanciful and trendily ridiculous, something that her parents, particularly her mother, Meredith, former dope dealer and hell-raiser, hoped and prayed would suit her as she emerged into the world. ♦

Where Broadway goes when New York snows!

Ask about our Early ek Cabaret Packages!

The Colony Hotel, Palm Beach. Sunshine, Frette linens, wonderful food, Worth Avenue, top notch entertainment. Over half a century serving Presidents, Princesses, Broadway Stars & special guests.

January is "Tony" month in The Royal Room – Faith Prince, Andrea Marcovicci & KT Sullivan!

1-866-899-0701

The Colony
PALM • BEACH

155 Hammon Ave., Palm Beach, FL 33480 • www.thecolonypalmbeach.com

www.breakell.com HEART KEY

A most romantic token from James Breakell's workshop. Finely detailed pendant on 18" chain. Sterling silver $35, 14k gold $163. Add $6 handling. Catalog available (800) 767-6411 or at **breakell.com**

1 ¼"

J.H. Breakell & Co.
132 Spring St., Dept. NYHK, Newport, RI 02840

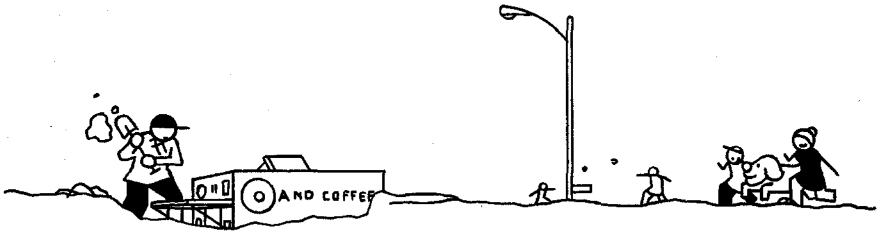
CELEBRATION BOWL
Weddings - Anniversaries
*Send someone you love a personalized crystal masterpiece.*
Special Inscriptions? Yes.
Rush delivery available.
8.5" - $139 12" - $249
831-427-3512
www.celebrationbowl.com

Do *you* DREAM OF ITALY?
*The travel newsletter for discriminating tastes.*
Subscribe now and receive a free report on villa rentals.
Call 877-OF-ITALY or visit our Web site.
**www.dreamofitaly.com**

**Canoe Canada's Arctic**
Fly-in canoe trips on the remote tundra rivers of North America's last great wilderness. Herds of caribou & muskoxen, white wolves, moose and grizzlies. Warm, arid summers. Wildlife biologist guide. Operating since 1974.
Brochure: **CANOE ARCTIC INC.** Box 130AK
Fort Smith, NT, X0E 0P0, Canada (867) 872-2308
**www.canoearctic.com**

*Women, Weight & Wellness*
Lifelong Solutions for Weight, Image and Eating-related Issues ... Since 1973
**GREEN MOUNTAIN *at* FOX RUN**
www.fitwoman.com
Brochure requests: 800.448.8106 VISA

# THE CRITICS



## THE CURRENT CINEMA

# KILLER

*Two views of Aileen Wuornos.*

BY DAVID DENBY

The prostitute and murderer Aileen Wuornos, who was executed in Florida in October, 2002, is difficult to look at without flinching. She appears in Nick Broomfield's documentary "Aileen: Life and Death of a Serial Killer," which was filmed just before she died. Broomfield caught her in high redemption mode. "I cannot go into that chamber as a liar," she says. "I have to clear my conscience and leave my spirit in the name of Jesus Christ." Speaking directly to Broomfield, Wuornos takes back the testimony she offered at her 1992 trial. She now says that when she shot seven men she was not, as she had earlier claimed, acting in self-defense. She killed the men—johns who picked her up on the road—in order to rob them. "I was into the robbin' biz," she says. Broomfield, who made an earlier documentary, in 1992, that was sympathetic to Wuornos's case, wonders, Is she coming clean, or is she suffering from death-row fatigue—the desire to get it over with? Wuornos has large, circular nostrils, jagged front teeth, patchy, mottled skin, a heavy jaw, and she bears all the marks of a spectacularly awful life as an abused kid, an itinerant prostitute, and a longtime convict. Unhappy people in documentaries often come off as affectless, distant, without focus. Aileen Wuornos is just the opposite. She's overfocussed: her eyes pop out of her head, and, even though she's shackled to a chair, every part of her body is wired and moving. She pulls down her mouth and tosses her hair, assaulting the camera with her sledgehammer ego, her suffering, her brutality, her belief in her own honesty. She may, in fact, be clinically insane, but she also has moments of lucidity and power, and she's unnerving. She's going to die, and she's determined to make her death mean what she wants it to mean, and not what anyone else wants it to.

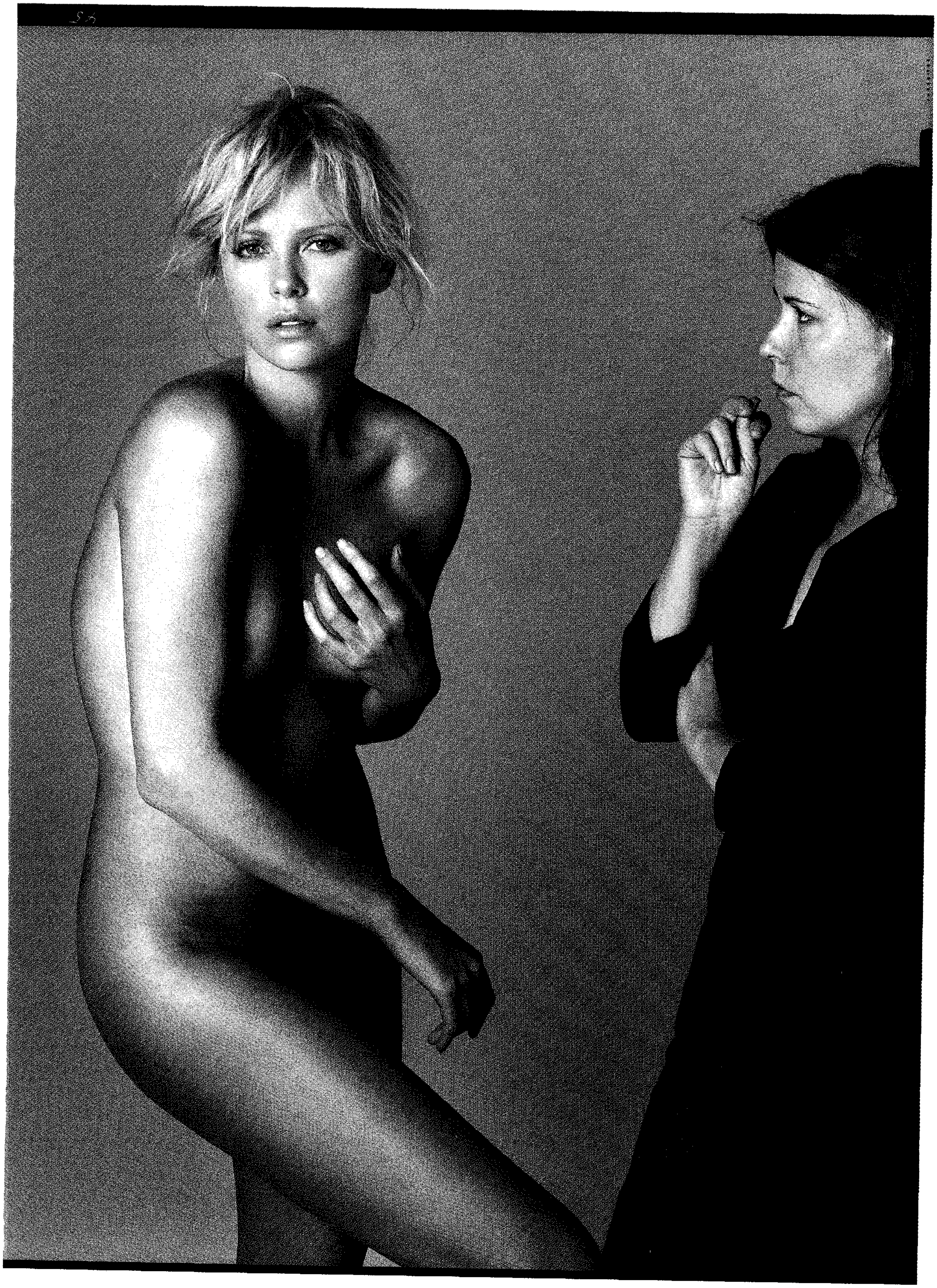
In a second new movie—"Monster," Patty Jenkins's feature film of the Wuornos story—Charlize Theron, playing Aileen, is much easier to take. Not that the material has been softened in any way. As everyone has said, Theron, working with the makeup genius Toni G., has produced an amazing physical copy of Wuornos. Theron, who was born in South Africa and was a model and a dancer with the Joffrey Ballet before she went into the movies, did some genuine acting in small parts in Woody Allen's "Celebrity" and in "The Devil's Advocate," but in "The Legend of Bagger Vance," "Sweet November," "The Cider House Rules," and "The Italian Job" she was unmemorable, almost decorative. She has a long, willowy body, golden skin, and a smile like a sunburst; she seemed a commercial fantasy of beauty—say, a domestic goddess in a *Life* magazine ad from 1954, or a prettily drawn Breck girl. To play Wuornos, Theron put on thirty pounds and endured an hour and a half of Toni G.'s ministrations each shooting day. But that kind of effort from an actress isn't unusual anymore. What is remarkable in "Monster" is that Theron gives a fully expressive and controlled performance.

Theron pulls her shoulders up into a rigid block (she could be wearing football pads under her shirt), thrusts out her chest and jaw, twitches, and shrugs as if her tendons were directed by will alone. Her Wuornos is telling the world to kiss off, get lost; Aileen seems to be imitating some tough father that she never had (her actual father left before she was born), yet, inevitably, she's reduced to sticking out her thumb on the highway in search of paying customers. Bravado and masochism fight a deadly war: sitting next to a strange man in a car, her face twisted into fury, she fights her disgust for what she has to do. With her mouth pulled down, Theron would scare off a normally cautious customer, but in these Florida road encounters we're out at the edge of madness, where danger is part of the excitement for both parties.

The scuzzy central-Florida setting gives Theron some acting ground to stand on. In such recent American movies as the Matt Dillon thriller "Wild Things," Larry Clark's "Bully," John Sayles's "Sunshine State," the Charlie Kaufman–Spike Jonze fantasia "Adaptation," and Frederick Wiseman's documentary "Domestic Violence," as well as Carl Hiaasen's novels, Florida has appeared as a kind of bedraggled kingdom of chaos. The swamps, the threadbare woods, the sagging, loose-hinged bungalows, the roadhouses with their grizzled and beer-bellied bikers, the long, droning freeways, cars tooling along to somewhere or other. . . . Florida is the place where life doesn't shape up. As the movies tell it, there's no structure, nothing hard or dense enough to mold people into coherent human beings. In both the fictional and the documentary versions, Wuornos the foul-mouthed slattern has been produced

PHOTOGRAPH BY RICHARD AVEDON

*Charlize Theron, who portrays Wuornos in "Monster," with Patty Jenkins, the movie's director.*



University Vacations
23RD ANNUAL PROGRAMS
*FREE* 2004 Catalog!
*25 cultural vacations at a selection of the world's top universities...*
CAMBRIDGE - OXFORD
YALE - PRINCETON
ROME - DUBLIN - PRAGUE
VIENNA - FLORENCE
*plus*
7 LECTURE CRUISES
*FREE* Catalog 800-792-0100
www.universityvacations.com

Hike the Alps.
Author/mountaineer Fred Jacobson leads special hiking trips in the Swiss and Italian Alps–Dolomites, Kandersteg, Meran, Sils Maria, Soglio, Sulden, and Zermatt. Spectacular scenery. Beautiful trails. Delightful inns and fine cuisine. For active outdoor people who also like their creature comforts. Our **32nd** summer!
*For free information contact:*
**ALPINE TRAVEL INC.**
P.O. Box 159 - NY
White Plains, NY 10605
Tel: (800) 291-8126
Visit us at www.alptrails.com
E-mail: alpine.travel@verizon.net

RETIRE TO CHAPEL HILL, NC
Fearrington Village is full of bluebirds, hollyhocks, belted cows, and fascinating people of all ages.
800.277.0130 www.fearrington.com

TODAY'S MILITARY
See it for what it really is.SM
1.866.VIEW NOW
www.todaysmilitary.com
Active • Guard • Reserve

"Neo-Classical You"
17th-20th century portraits of your 21st century self
**ORIGINAL HAND PAINTED PORTRAIT IN A MASTERWORK**
of you, your lover, spouse, child or pet.
Of you astride your horse, or you pictured in a RENOIR, MANET, DEGAS, DA VINCI or other artist of your choice.
World Renowned Artist
Call 212.861.0011

BIKE RIDERS TOURS
small groups, gracious inns and wonderful dining.
bicycling vacations in new england, canada & europe.
free catalog: 1-800-473-7040 • www.bikeriderstours.com

by a foul, slatternly society. Broomfield's work is far more explicit about Wuornos's childhood, in which she seems to have been abused by boys as well as men, with no one around to protect her (her mother ran off when she was an infant). Jenkins presents Wuornos as a damaged survivor, the belligerent queen of the road. She has her jeans, her leather jacket, her resourcefulness in finding a place to sleep or stash her stuff. At her favorite bar, she meets a lower-middle-class girl, Selby (Christina Ricci), whose father has sent her to Florida, to live with her aunt, as a punishment for kissing another girl. They start talking, hook up, and Wuornos experiences the first loving emotions of her life—she feels protective toward needy little Selby, who hasn't a clue what she wants to do with herself. Ricci still has a baby face, with unusually large eyes and a small chin. Photographed from above—from Theron's point of view—she looks foreshortened, and the performance is foreshortened, too; at times, her Selby seems not so much needy as infantile and petulant.

Ricci's Selby doesn't quite seem worthy of Wuornos's sudden desire. We make allowances, however, because we want this risky movie to work. And it does. Despite Ricci's weakness, "Monster" sounds the familiar and touching chords of young love on the run—the picture is in the tradition of Nicholas Ray's "They Live by Night," Arthur Penn's "Bonnie and Clyde," and Terrence Malick's "Badlands," though it hasn't been made with the conscious art of any of those movies. Patty Jenkins, who wrote the screenplay as well as directed, has a background in commercials and music videos, but she works in a plain, straightforward way, concentrating on the emotional connection between the two women—their arguments, reconciliations, lovemaking—and then the increasing dread they both feel as Wuornos goes wild. Her emotional attentiveness makes one wonder, Could a new generation of female directors pull at least part of our movie culture away from frantic digital spectacle? Sofia Coppola ("Lost in Translation") and Catherine Hardwicke ("Thirteen") stay as close to their characters as they can; Jenkins, working with the mayhem of real life, does violence in a sober way—it's frightening rather than sensational.

The first killing, which took place in 1989, is, as Jenkins reconstructs it, a genuine case of self-defense. A savage-looking guy picks Wuornos up, torments her, and is preparing to kill her when she empties a revolver into his chest. Theron then gets out of the car, falls to her knees, and lets out a war whoop of relief and triumph that is one of the more uncanny things I've heard in recent movies. We know, at that moment, that Wuornos is *doomed*—that she has fulfilled herself as a personality in a way that can lead only to catastrophe. She needs to earn money to support Selby, and, after some naïve attempts to get a regular job (she invariably blows up and curses out the interviewer), she takes to the road again. Riding into the woods with a client, she taunts and goads the man, bringing out his aggression, and then kills him for it. Is she taking a prostitute's rage to its ultimate conclusion, or is she just crazy? There's no simple answer. Or perhaps the answer is: both. The movie is thoroughly ambiguous. Theron's ferocity pushes the material over the top, but then tenderness—flashes of gentleness and vulnerability, a softness in her eyes—retrieves it from tabloid exploitation and camp horror. This is one instance in which art clearly trumps documentary "truth." The real Wuornos is too will-driven to show us more than one side of herself. In the end, you need a sane person and an artist to bring out the humanity in a crazy person. The title, of course, is ironic: "Monster" has become a tabloid moniker for serial killers. The point of the movie is that this monster is both a victim and a predator, unimaginably exploited and unimaginably vicious. Is there an audience for a heroine quite so hard to judge morally? I don't know the answer, but if the notoriously squeamish and slumberous members of the Academy can pull themselves together and face "Monster," they should know whom to vote for as the best actress of the year. ♦

---

### BELLA ITALIA

*From a Tuscan travel brochure.*

Spending a holiday by Mazzocchi-Marilli's like to find the hospitality of old friends. Beside you can feel an atmosphere of thoughtlessness and light-heartedness, which only a Tuscan farm can offer.

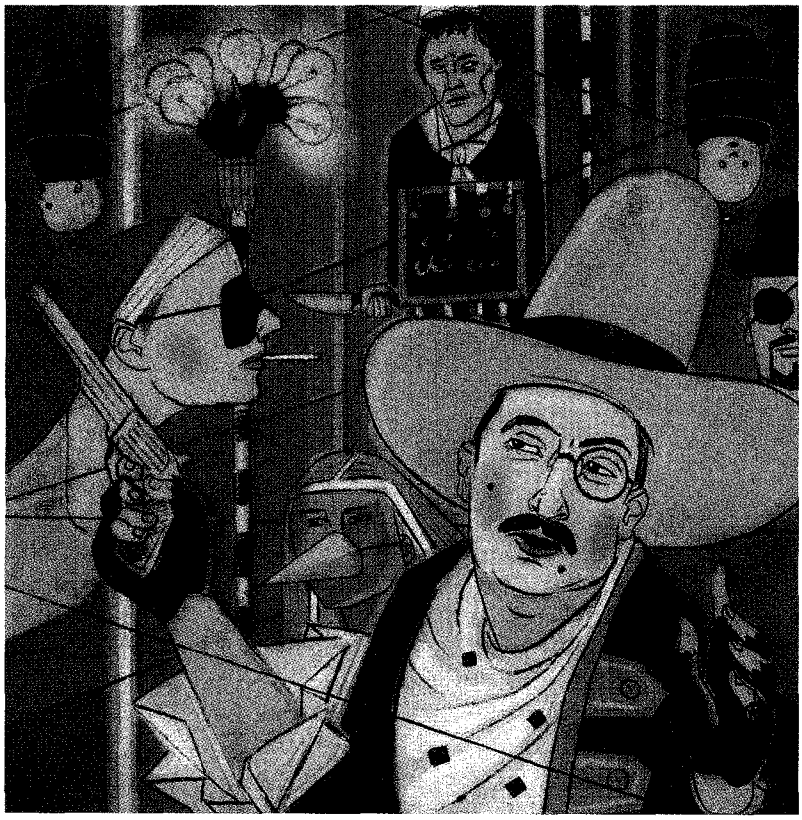
THE THEATRE

# THE BIG ROUNDUP

*Richard Foreman takes on the ghosts of imperialism.*

BY HILTON ALS

Before the vital and brilliant American playwright and director Richard Foreman found a permanent home for his Ontological-Hysteric Theater, at St. Mark's Church, in 1992, you had to seek out his annual productions in small, experimental venues around town. I first went to one of Foreman's plays, "Eddie Goes to Poetry City: Part 2," at La Mama in 1991. I had never seen anything like it before, and haven't seen anything comparable since. By then, I'd already heard about Foreman; I knew that he not only had been writing, directing, and designing his own plays since 1968 but also had directed works by Brecht and Molière, here and abroad, and staged a number of operas, ranging from Johann Strauss to Philip Glass. Still, nothing had prepared me for the darkness and the dazzle—the murky splendor—of "Eddie." A kind of Cubist "Candide" that evoked the wretchedness of desire, the play infiltrated my thoughts until its actors and its dialogue began to feel like figments of my own imagination, suddenly made real in *my* poetry city, New York.



*Power play: "King Cowboy Rufus" evokes the leadership of Bush and Blair.*

EDEL RODRIGUEZ

Eddie, a sweet, open-faced naïf, was a poet-Christ figure, wandering through a corrupt metropolis where a series of hardboiled female characters tried to lure him down the slippery, sexy path to wisdom. And yet he remained largely incorruptible. The cynicism he encountered was as baffling to him as the lipsticked sirens whose movements were choreographed to entice him. At some point, his good-natured optimism began to feel almost as grotesque and willful as the temptations of the villains around him. To tell Eddie's story, Foreman eschewed the conventional dramatic devices of exposition, motivation, and resolution in linear time and space. Throwing Aristotle out, he ushered the subconscious in. His dialogue was full of the hilarious slips of the tongue and double entendres of daily life that allow our sentiments, as well as our nightmares, to seep to the surface. In an essay in his 1992 collection, "Unbalancing Acts: Foundations for a Theater," Foreman explained his artistic intent this way: "Society teaches us to represent our lives to ourselves within the framework of a current narrative, but beneath that conditioning we *feel* our lives as a series of multidirectional impulses and collisions." He went on, "I like to think of my plays as an hour and a half in which you see the world through a special pair of eyeglasses. These glasses may not block out all narrative coherence, but they magnify so many other aspects of experience that you simply lose interest in trying to hold on to narrative coherence, and instead, allow yourself to become absorbed in the moment-by-moment representation of psychic freedom."

In short, Foreman is a poetic realist. The psychic freedom in his work grows, oddly, out of his fixed obsessions—namely, female sexuality (he generally views women as dangerous, conniving, alluring vamps) and his own Jewishness. Foreman has described himself as a "closet religious writer," and many of the stage sets he designs contain symbols from Jewish mysticism, which serve as talismans of his faith and of what that faith has generated in him: a spirit of inquiry, skepticism, and hope. Foreman's casts always include at least one character—usually male—who appears as the Semitic model of disbelief.

In his latest work, "King Cowboy Rufus Rules the Universe!," that character is given the rather stolid yet florid name of Baron Herman De Voto (played by the versatile T. Ryder Smith). At the beginning of the play, De Voto, dressed like an errant rabbi in a dark suit and a stiff black wig, renounces his ownership of a tobacco factory, which, it seems, is the source of all social evil. Sitting at a table, facing the audience, De Voto intones in the snidest of voices, "Thank God I am closing down my dilapidated tobacco factory—stuffed full of coquettes and whores. I've had enough of this shit world in which I find myself." This is Krazy Kat by way of Spengler—a dis-

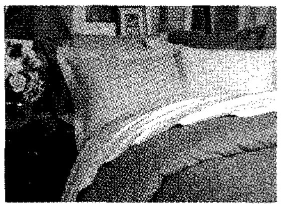
ADVERTISEMENT

Profiles in Commerce

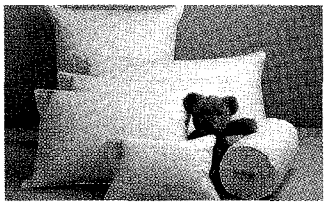
The stories behind some of your favorite ads in The New Yorker

WARM THINGS

Richard Smith-Allen always knew that he was going to own his own business–he just didn't know what kind.



After earning a business degree, he took a job with a maker of down sleeping bags. Quickly learning the business, he set aside half of his hourly wage until he had $2,500. Add a $2,500 loan from his mom, and Warm Things was born in his Berkeley home.



Thirty years later, Warm Things continues to thrive. High quality and great value keep customers coming back. The Warm Things product line has grown to include down quilts, comforters, robes, slippers, vests, throws, pillows, and sheets.

A familiar brand, known to more than a generation of *New Yorker* readers, Warm Things today also has five retail stores in the Bay Area.

For more information, visit warmthingsonline.com or call 415-472-2154.

tinctly Yiddish locution with a nasty street snarl, which tips De Voto into a defensive kind of despair. De Voto serves as a sort of alter ego for Foreman—the critic in the playwright's mind, the character who doubts the artistic process even as he becomes an integral part of it. With his deadpan face and conservative gestures, De Voto is the heckler at the back of the class. In this case, the classroom is the world. And the world is an outgrowth of Foreman's distinctive visual imagination.

The stage at St. Mark's is relatively small—it measures twenty-eight feet across—but Foreman floods it with information. Stage left: oil paintings in fake-gilt frames show women in Renaissance dress, standing by canals. Stage right: a sign advertises the Maison Rouge, a cathouse. At the front of the stage, facing the audience, Foreman has placed four poles, each holding a cluster of light bulbs that give off a migraine-inducing glare. Above the center of the stage, a row of fluorescent lights flicker. As the director Peter Sellars points out in the foreword to "Unbalancing Acts," in a Richard Foreman production, "There are messages written all over the set. . . . The lights are flashing because, in our lives, the lights *are* flashing. Are we getting the signals . . . or are we going to shut our eyes until it's all over? Are we able to gaze steadily into the source of brightest light? At what point does it become too painful?"

Part of what makes Foreman's characters feel like apparitions—figures who, in the midst of a hideous, cluttered landscape, seem to take in nothing at all—is their lack of response to the glare. Light is as natural to them as darkness is to a bat. At least, Susie Sitwell (Juliana Francis), a former worker at De Voto's factory, seems to flower in it. Delivering her lines with the flat affect of a lobotomized but naughty ingénue, doused in L'Air du Temps and intelligence—her sharp, stilted movements recall those of Oliver Sacks's "sleeping" patients in the film "Awakenings"—Susie is looking for a new boss, a new man, a new hero, to take De Voto's place. (Without a man, she makes clear, her existence as a self-described "coquette" would be meaningless.) The man she needs appears almost at once: King Cowboy Rufus (the gifted Jay Smith), who decides to buy the tobacco factory. Wearing a ten-gallon hat and an eighteenth-century frock coat, his lips and face rouged and powdered beyond anything Beau Brummell could have imagined, his belly jiggling over his sheepskin chaps, Rufus stalks the small stage with aplomb. This is *his* world, he seems to be saying; we're just living in it. "Are you really an American cowboy hero?" Susie asks him. "Or rather—an old-fashioned English fop harboring impossible dreams of glory?" Well, Rufus is a bit of both. And why not? Isn't this make-believe?

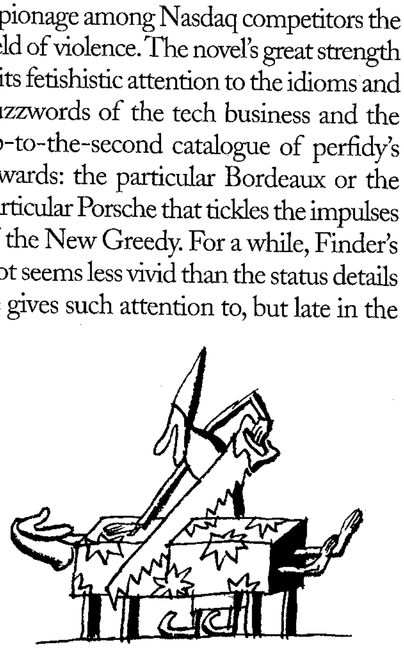
It is, and it isn't. Rufus's will to power—like that of the world leaders he evokes, George W. Bush and Tony Blair—is as real as he is invented. Rufus is a symbol of imperialism gone mad. "I'm no traitor. And I'll prove it easily with my subsequent violent behavior," he announces. He has "family values"—dolls descend from the ceiling whenever he needs to prove that he loves children—but what do those values mean when the very heart of his quest is to suppress and destroy anything that contradicts his own reality? "Recently I find myself performing random acts that just bounce back and forth inside my head like a ferocious game of Cowboy Ping-Pong," he says, after firing his gun at Susie and trying to strangle De Voto. In the unexplained mayhem that follows, the characters are blindfolded and left to stumble around the stage and slit their throats, in a kind of hell of their own making.

"King Cowboy Rufus Rules the Universe!" is, ultimately, about our inability to "wake up"—as an offstage voice (Foreman's own) repeatedly commands us to do. The play is one of the most overtly political of Foreman's recent works, but he balances its didacticism with a mordant wit. At the end of the show, the supporting cast carry globes onstage for Rufus's target practice, but he is stymied: he can't choose which world, which reality, to destroy first. "King Cowboy Rufus" echoes the past (from time to time we hear a voice counting in German, punctuating the dialogue). But history, Foreman implies, is what we're done with; now we must make our way, through the blinding lights of CNN and other forms of propaganda, into an unbrave new world. ♦

# BRIEFLY NOTED

The Grandmothers, *by Doris Lessing (HarperCollins; $23.95).* The subtitle of this collection of stories—"Four Short Novels"—announces their ambition: each unfolds over decades, tracking with dispassionate precision how youthful notions come to define, and even defeat, a life. Two women seal their friendship by seducing each other's teen-age son; an aged counsellor recounts the decay of a mysterious ancient civilization ruled by a handsome but foolish despot; an impoverished black girl bears the child of a middle-class white boy, and is welcomed by his self-consciously liberal family. Lessing's scathing intelligence ranges widely, but her tales tend to wobble under the weight of her ideas. She is at her best in the final story, which extends from England to the outposts of empire in South Africa and India during the Second World War. A British soldier has a brief affair with an officer's wife, and in later years becomes obsessed with the idea that he might have fathered a son, a possibility that appears to him as the key to the life he should have led.

Paranoia, *by Joseph Finder (St. Martin's; $24.95).* In another age, a genre thriller fairly required the brandishing of a weapon and blood smeared on the floor. Finder's latest is the archetype of the thriller in its contemporary form: e-mail is the means of communication and threat, industrial espionage among Nasdaq competitors the field of violence. The novel's great strength is its fetishistic attention to the idioms and buzzwords of the tech business and the up-to-the-second catalogue of perfidy's rewards: the particular Bordeaux or the particular Porsche that tickles the impulses of the New Greedy. For a while, Finder's plot seems less vivid than the status details he gives such attention to, but late in the book we discover how completely we have been fooled, and with real escapist pleasure.



In My Father's Footsteps, *by Sebastian Matthews (Norton; $24.95).* When the poet William Matthews died, in 1997, his son Sebastian was left with the patchwork legacy of a father who was lovable but evasive—the kind of brilliant man who, when quizzed about his many infidelities, might deftly change the subject to viticulture or the glory days of the Cincinnati Reds. In this memoir, the son recalls his tumultuous childhood, spent shuttling between the hippie encampments where his mother lived and the college towns (with their college girls) through which his father drifted. As a teen-ager in Seattle, he discovered his father's world of wine, coffee, jazz, smoke, and poetry, and soon slipped into the imitative role of writers'-colony seducer and campus scapegrace. Buttressing the narrative with fragments of his parents' verse (his mother, Marie Harris, is also a poet), the younger Matthews describes his slow passage from being "the son of the famous poet" to establishing an identity of his own.

American Mafia, *by Thomas Reppetto (Henry Holt; $26).* In the eighteen-eighties, the legendary New York police detective Thomas Byrnes outlined a simple solution to the Mafia problem: "Let them kill each other." For Reppetto, such a view reflects dangerous illusions about the Mob's foreignness and insularity. Immigrants didn't import organized crime, he writes; "they found it here when they arrived." If Italians bested other ethnic groups, it was because they were, in this respect, the better assimilationists. His clear-eyed study portrays a Mafia that managed to be both national in scope and—despite investigators' hunt for an elusive "Mr. Big"—surprisingly decentralized. Reppetto covers the usual suspects, like Luciano and Capone, but is particularly fascinated by the intersection of Mob life with the establishment. He believes that the Mob boss Frank Costello uttered a basic truth about his business when, in 1951, he told the Kefauver committee, "I love this country."

READ THE CITY
Enjoy exclusive author interviews, essays, and reviews on the web, or delivered straight to your inbox, for free!
powells.com
Powell's City of Books. Since 1971.

CORNELL UNIVERSITY
NEWYORK PRESBYTERIAN HOSPITAL
PAYNE WHITNEY FACULTY PRACTICE
PSYCHIATRIC SPECIALTY CONSULTATION AND TREATMENT
Superior quality psychiatric consultation and treatment with Weill-Cornell faculty on a private fee basis.
The Multi-Specialty Group provides rapid response to referral requests, matching of patient need to clinician, and highly individualized attention to each patient.
1-888-694-2255

www.dallaspridgenjewelry.com
DALLAS PRIDGEN JEWELRY
One at a time, by hand
When Pigs Fly
Pin or Pendant
Sterling Silver $65
14K Gold $298
Unconditionally guaranteed
1·800·477·1856
PO Box 147
Chapel Hill, NC
27514
VISA

BAGGIERandBETTER℠
Guaranteed impeccable after 125+ washes! 100% pima cotton oxford. Truly generous cut, 3 7/16" full roll collar, long sleeves and tail. White, Blue. New Buyer Special.
Save 25% Only $59 ppd.
Swatches, Plain Collars, Sport Shirts, Big/Talls.
1-800-705-2828
MERCERANDSONS.COM Bx 27C Yarmouth, ME 04096

KIAWAH ISLAND
ON-LINE TRIP PLANNER
Charleston's Beach Resorts
Web & Color Vacation Guides
866.361.6940 Toll Free
KiawahGuides.com
Book-on-line • Great Beach Vacations

BOOKS

# MIND/BODY PROBLEMS

*New novels by Andrew Sean Greer and Hanif Kureishi.*

BY JOHN UPDIKE

We look to fiction for images of reality—real life rendered as vicarious experience, with a circumstantial intimacy that more factual, explanatory accounts cannot quite supply. Yet the freedom to invent tempts the fiction writer to fantasy. Already, his manipulation of time, speeding it up and slowing it down according to the needs of his story, and his scanting of the routine and banality that make up most of life's substance take unrealistic liberties. John Hawkes, a conspicuous avant-garde libertarian, once announced, to the astonishment of a writing class in which I was enrolled, "When I want a character to fly, I just write, 'He flew.' " In its dizzying freedom fiction holds an opportunity to dramatize certain existential questions that mark the beginnings of philosophy in a child. Why am I—my consciousness, my mind—in this body and not another? Why do I exist now instead of in the past or the future? Why does time only move forward? What would it be like to live life backward, from old age to infancy?

This last question, lent some weight by the remaining puzzles in the biology of aging and the actual, pathological instances of premature senility in the very young, has an American literary pedigree. F. Scott Fitzgerald published a story, "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button," on the theme in 1922. Including it in his collection "Tales of the Jazz Age," he noted in a foreword:

> This story was inspired by a remark of Mark Twain's to the effect that it was a pity that the best part of life came at the beginning and the worst part at the end. By trying the experiment upon only one man in a perfectly normal world I have scarcely given his idea a fair trial. Several weeks after completing it, I discovered an almost identical plot in Samuel Butler's "Note-books."

It perhaps says something about Fitzgerald's psychology that the story's opening sections, with Button as an old man, come across as coarse and brittle farce, whereas the end, in which the hero regresses into infancy, feels seductively plausible:

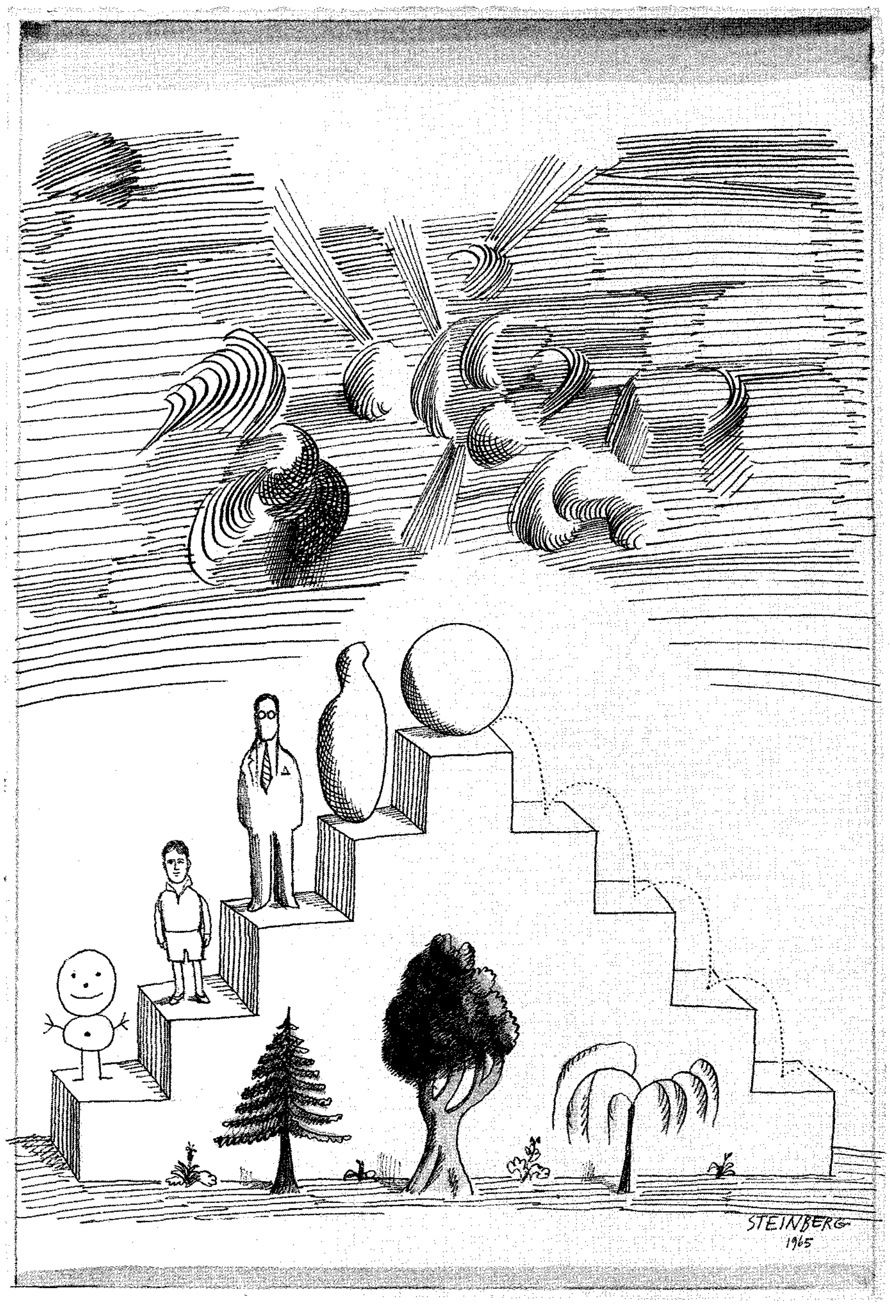
> Through the noons and nights he breathed and over him there were soft mumblings and murmurings that he scarcely heard, and faintly differentiated smells, and light and darkness.
>
> Then it was all dark, and his white crib and the dim faces that moved above him, and the warm sweet aroma of the milk, faded out altogether from his mind.

Though not one of Fitzgerald's best, the story was reprised eighty years later by Gabriel Brownstein, in his story collection "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button, Apt. 3W" (2002). The title story, a fantastic riff upon a fantasy, almost duplicates Fitzgerald's for a few sentences but goes off weirdly in its own directions. Button, born ancient in 1912, masquerades in "shtetl drag" as a jazz pianist "known variously as the Hey-Hey Hebrew, the Jitterbug Jew, and the Kokomotion Kike" during the late twenties, and reappears in the seventies as a barefoot hippie living, with his aged mother, in the same West Side apartment building occupied by the adolescent narrator. Benjamin Button's parents are a Southern woman and a "merchant banker" who is trying to suppress his Jewish, East Side origins, as the grandson of a rabbi. A great deal of new baggage is thus loaded upon the tenuous figure of Button, and he sinks beneath it, as Fitzgerald's ending returns in starker, more structuralist terms:

> Soon, he could not tell day from night, pain from want, and finally presence from absence. Long after he ceased to feel the movement of time, he faded completely from its progress.

Two years later in this progress, an entire novel, resplendently poetic and loftily sorrowing, "The Confessions of Max Tivoli," by Andrew Sean Greer (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $23), has appeared. The name Benjamin Button is retired, but the thought-experiment remains. This time, the man at the end of his life is born in 1871, in San Francisco, of a Southern woman and a self-invented entrepreneur, not Jewish but Danish, who has changed his name from Asgar Van Daler to Tivoli, in honor of the Copenhagen park he remembers. Young-old Max's early memories are richly entwined with the animal wonders of San Francisco's Woodward's Gardens, one of the many lost local sights that Greer revives, with an eerie sensory omniscience, from the dry pages of research. He is one of numerous young-old contemporary fiction writers—Mark Helprin, Thomas Mallon, Caleb Carr, Alice Munro, Andrea Barrett, with E. L. Doctorow as godfather—to whom time past is an open book, a theme park in which they wander with a child's delight in gaudiness and violence. What Henry James, himself now part of the past and available as a theme-park exhibit, breathlessly called the "palpable present *intimate* that throbs responsive" is pointedly neglected in favor of what he called "mere *escamotage* . . . the little facts that can be got from pictures and documents, relics and prints." All fiction, insofar as it derives from the writer's memories, is historical in a sense; but a reader who has hearkened to Henry James enters guardedly ingeniously reconstructed worlds that ceased to exist before the author was born. A circumstantiality assembled of little documentary facts can feel flimsy, offering less resistance to enchantment than an unsifted environment clumsily pressing all around us.

That said, "The Confessions of Max Tivoli" is enchanting, in the perfumed, dandified style of disenchantment brought to grandeur by Proust and Nabokov. "Love . . . ever unsatisfied, lives always in the moment that is about to come," runs the novel's epigraph, from Proust, and Greer's opening sentence reads, "We are each the love of someone's life." The general fate of misdirected, unarrived love, then, merges with the singular case of Max Tivoli, who begins with the innocent mind of a child in an old man's body, and, after a brief and blissful intersection, in 1906, of his inner age with his physical age, ends with a man's mournful wisdom in a child's body. Max



SAUL STEINBERG, UNTITLED (1965) ©THE SAUL STEINBERG FOUNDATION

differs from Benjamin Button in that Button begins with a fully stocked old brain and ends with a newborn's tabula rasa; whereas Max learns as he goes, as do those of us not condemned to age in reverse. Sex, for example, comes upon him when he has the able body of a fifty-three-year-old and the inexperience of an exceptionally chaste seventeen-year-old. His lover, the downstairs tenant Mrs. Levy, is ardent enough for two, crooning to him as they copulate in a bed of phlox, "You're a good man, Max, don't worry, you haven't touched a woman in a while, have you? Max, you good, good man." However, it is not the mother Max loves but the daughter, fourteen-year-old Alice, upon whom he spies with the ornate prurience of Humbert Humbert yearning for Lolita. Max (whose memoirs are written for Alice eventually to read) glimpses her one night looking for something in their shared back garden:

> I could see through the neck of your loose cotton chemise a pink landscape of skin. You turned and writhed in your cloud and I turned and writhed in mine. I saw your legs stretching and tensing as you hunted and jerked your body in hope; women's pantaloons were devious things in those days, split down the crotch with overlapping fabric, and once you shifted just carelessly enough to allow the veil to part and I glimpsed the vulnerable blue veins of your thighs. . . . I hope you'll find it flattering, now that you are old as well, to think of me in bed, staring at my memory like a French postcard, watching the starlight trickle into the darkness of your clothes.

The passage illustrates the author's remarkably confident acquaintance with female clothes of the era 1880-1930, as well as, in the epithet "trickle," the gemmy sparkle of his prose. Elsewhere, he writes of "a face unlatched with longing" and a beloved older woman's "sky-gray hair" and a deer's "moon-iced antlers." With no evident effort, he works into his intricately unfolding narrative such startling bygone details as "a newspaper still warm from the butler's iron" and "a saloon owner with a gold cane and vulcanized rubber fillings in his smile" and "the latest Paris fashion: a live beetle, iridescently winged, attached to her dress with a golden chain." A great love for a vanished San Francisco, the pre-earthquake "old San Francisco of gilt-edged gas lamps and velvet walls," breathes through these pages, whose sepia background of luxury and brutality almost swallows the central characters and their rather schematically star-crossed affections. Even as young Max ogles the ineffable Alice, her attention fastens upon his one and only friend, Hughie, faithful Hughie, who has played with the senescent little freak as if he were a normal boy, and who keeps their friendship through fifty eventful years, while he himself, beneath the surface life of a respectable married lawyer . . . Never mind. Save Hughie's cathexis for the end of the book. Rest assured, patient reader, that "The Confessions of Max Tivoli" is long on longing and short on lasting satisfactions, as full of broken hearts as it is of dazzling local, time-specific color. "We each have an awful bargain in our lives" is one of Greer's aphorisms, while on the next page another boasts, "It is a brave and stupid thing, a beautiful thing, to waste one's life for love." In "Blame It on My Youth," one of the fine if faintly preening stories collected in Greer's "How It Was for Me," an aphoristic surge suggests how the author might have been drawn to the reversed life story:

> Love works backward in time, like all secrets. It colors memory and first impressions, dull evenings and late sleepless nights. It makes them glow with heat, like coals taken for dead.

The huge technical challenge of framing a life lived backward is cunningly, handsomely met. Max, who supposedly indites these confessions in the year 1930, having lodged himself in a small household containing an irksome and insulting boy roughly his apparent age and a kindly if distracted mother approaching sixty, has survived a number of the young century's crises. He and his wife are thrown together in the great earthquake of 1906 and feverishly separate during a siege of flu in 1917; the Great War provides a convenient theatre in which Max, enlisting, can bury his grief. The advents of electricity and the automobile are woven into his ever more youthful life's fabric. He and Hughie, on a footloose auto journey slyly echoing the highway wanderings in "Lolita," rig their Chrysler with a radio and, while Max turns too boyish to drive, the scattered, staticky programs of the late twenties crackle from the depths of the past, not just the names—Baby Snooks, the Fat Man—but the contents:

> "Yowsah yowsah yowsah," the maestro Ben Bernie used to whisper to us, and "Au revoir, pleasant dreams." And advertisements, of course, an interesting insight into the obsessions of the middle class: "If you want your teeth to shine like pearls, buy Dr. Straaska's Toothpaste." I admit it; I bought some.

Terrifyingly, during this trip Max is overtaken by childhood: "In the last few years, I had noticed a definite shift in things; my muscles lost their form, my shoes became too big, and, most astonishing of all, the world began to rise around me. . . . It was never going to be safe in my body again." This feels believable; we shrink toward the end. At the other end, Greer does all he can to distract us from the initial blow to the reader's suspension of disbelief, the anatomical grotesquerie of a woman giving birth to a full-sized old man. Fitzgerald and Brownstein bluster it through with noisy hospital scenes, summoning up outraged doctors and nurses and bearded ancients crammed into cribs and bassinets, whereas Greer fudges the newborn's size, and the Danish father cheerfully gives the "wrinkled, palsied" apparition the friendly status of a Nordic legend, a fabled gnome:

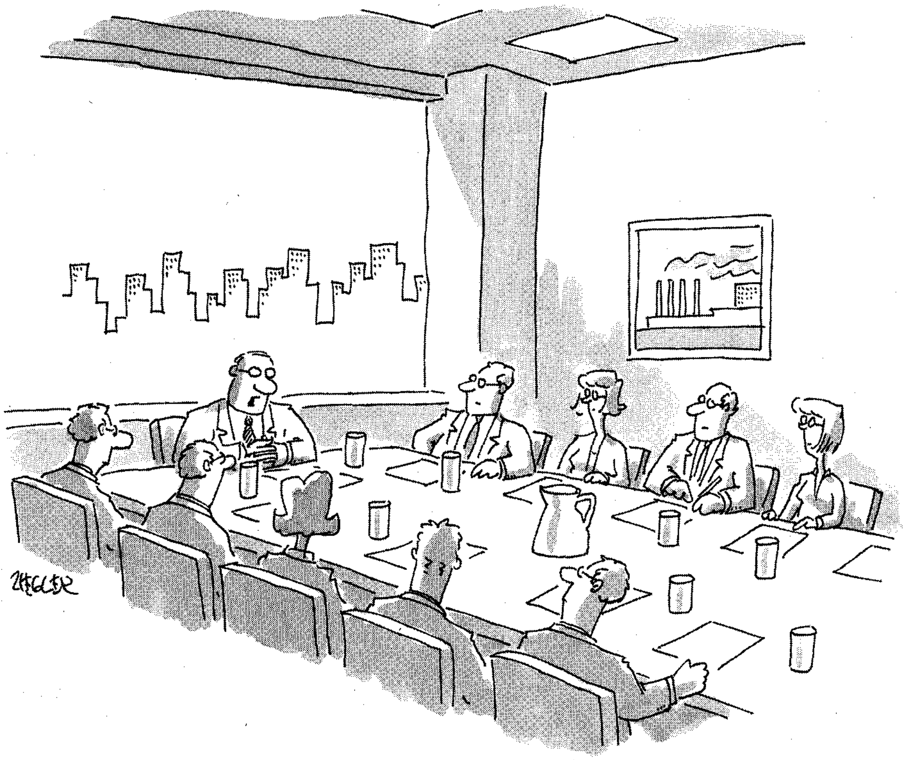
> "He is a *Nisse!* He is lucky, darling." He leaned down to kiss her forehead and then my own, which was falsely lined with decades of worry. He smiled at his wife and then spoke sternly to the midwife: "He is ours, we will not let him go."

As Max matures, his maladjustments are not far off the beaten track. Normal men, also, can feel too young for sex, and too old for the world's rough-and-tumble, and out of synch with their love objects, and prey to unstoppable bodily changes. For Max, the added effort of coördinating his inner age with the world's expectations of his outer shell gives his life passage a heightened focus and alertness; whatever his woes, he is spared the boredom of settling into an allotted spot and growing old in it. Growing against the grain of time, he feels time densely; the terror of transience and the tragedy of life's limits permeate this novel in a way that makes "Lolita" seem, relatively, a merry book, sporting an immigrant's amusement at America and connivance in its vulgar freedoms. Like Proust, Greer presents life as essentially a solitude, an ever-renewed exile from the present, a shifting set of gorgeous mirages that nothing but descriptive genius can hold fast. Max writes, "Life is short, and full of sorrows, and I loved it." His poignantly awry existence, set out with such a wealth of verbal flourishes and gilded touches, serves as a heightened version of the strangeness, the muted disharmony, of being human.

Reversion to youth and a drastic mind/body disjunction are proposed in a brusquer form by Hanif Kureishi in his short novel "The Body" (Scribner; $18): the hero, Adam, a playwright and writer in his wearying sixties, simply buys himself a new body, into which his brain is transplanted with no more trace than a small scar on the top of his head. The young surgeon cheerfully admits:

> "It takes time and great expertise. But so does cleaning a great painting. The right person has to do it. There are not many of those people yet. But it can be done. It is, of course, something that was always going to happen."

Kureishi, born in Bromley, Kent, in 1954, of a Pakistani-immigrant father and an English mother, has written some lauded screenplays ("My Beautiful Laundrette," 1985; "Sammy and Rosie Get Laid," 1987) and exuberant novels, of which the earlier ("The Buddha of Suburbia," 1990; "The Black Album," 1995) show characters shedding their Asian, Islamic puritanism in favor of heady Occidental temptations, summed up by the first novel's teen-age narrator as "mysticism, alcohol, sexual promise, clever people and



*"I'll begin today's proceedings by saying that we have enough food and water to last us until some sort of eventual turnaround."*

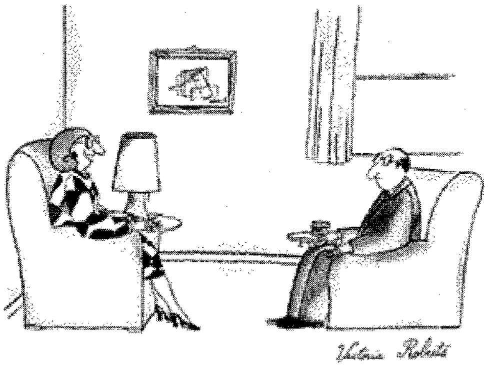
Advertisement

# THE NEW YORKER
# COMPASS

The Marketing Department of The New Yorker invites readers to join an exclusive online forum, The New Yorker Compass, which gathers topical opinion and guidance via Web-based surveys throughout the year.

As a Compass member, you'll have the opportunity to weigh in on a variety of interesting topics. Survey participation is always voluntary, and all information provided remains confidential.

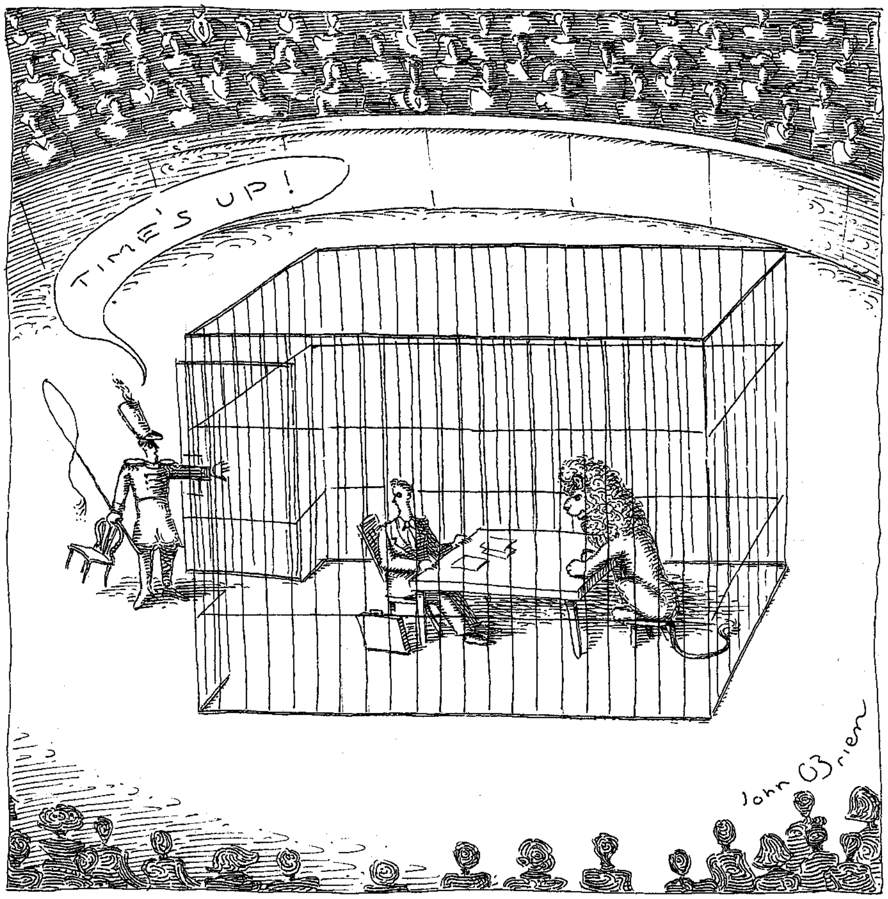
As a token of our appreciation, The New Yorker will award members with a choice of New Yorker-themed computer "wallpaper": a collage of vintage New Yorker covers or a selection of New Yorker cartoons.



*"Don't worry, Howard. The big questions are multiple choice."*

**POINT THE WAY. JOIN TODAY.**

**www.newyorkercompass.com**



drugs." Bodies abound in Kureishi's fiction, and their doings are described with a lack of inhibition that distinguishes him from, say, V. S. Naipaul, who only in his latest novel, "Half a Life," got down and dirty about the sexually seething immigrants' London he encountered in the nineteen-fifties. A generation later, Kureishi's easy frankness extends to the fraught psychological, conversational margins of sex acts, and such guilt-ridden works as the novella "Intimacy" and the short story "Strangers When We Meet" can be harrowing. But in "The Body" the hero, adrift both as a famous oldster in London cultural circles and as a beautiful youngster in the party circles of Europe, is so assimilated, so denatured, so securely removed from the lively, home-based ethnic/ethical conflicts usually driving Kureishi's fiction that his sketchy adventures form less a novel than a parable.

As a parable, "The Body" has its telling moments, especially in the first half. The clinic, housed in "a run-down warehouse on a bleak, windblown industrial estate outside London," where Adam is persuaded to part with his body and his savings, is a slice of bland, upbeat bio-horror out of "Brave New World." Having opted not for permanent occupation but for a six-month rental of a new body, Adam browses among the rows of suspended, refrigerated corpses ("Once . . . there was culture, now there is shopping," he later reflects) and chooses an Adonis of color ("or rather, he had seemed to choose me"):

> Stocky and as classically handsome as any sculpture in the British Museum, he was neither white nor dark but lightly toasted, with a fine, thick penis and heavy balls. I would, at last, have the body of an Italian footballer: an aggressive, attacking midfielder.

Smoothly and painlessly transferred to this excellent vehicle, Adam renames himself Leo Raphael Adams and doesn't quite know what to do with himself. He stands on his head, and he admires his new prowess at urination—"When I peed, the stream was full, clear, and what I must describe as 'decisive.' " (Contrariwise, poor Max Tivoli, on his backward way to prepuberty, laments his boyish penis, "a sleek little snail . . . forever soft, rubbery, good only for peeing long distances on the side of the road.") Leo Adams, in his new housing, does get laid, as his mentor, Ralph, advises, but mostly lies low in hotel rooms and walks for miles, "as though I were at the wheel of a luxury car," relishing his smooth steady strides and the way he can "see over the heads of others on the street" (who said he was stocky?). He wanders from London to Europe; he enjoys a variety of casual conversations and takes odd jobs—biographer's assistant, "picker" at the door of a club in Vienna, kept man of an American heiress outside Perugia. He falls in with a fast film set, takes drugs, attends orgies.

Youth is wasted on the young, George Bernard Shaw once said; this seems true even the second time around. As Adam, he had been puny and shy of physical intimacy. "As a Newbody, however," Leo writes, "I began to like the pornographic circus of rough sex. . . . I begged to be turned into meat, held down, tied, blindfolded, slapped, pulled, and strangled, entirely merged in the physical, all my swirling selves sucked into orgasm." When such exertion palls, he stumbles upon a "spiritual center" on a Greek island, where he becomes an "oddjob," who lets the female clients and, eventually, the center's founder and directress adore him. Then, at a party on a yacht, he meets Matte, another Newbody and the yacht's owner; it develops that Matte wants Leo's body for his dying elderly brother, and Kureishi's parable closes with a chase, ending back at the brain-transplant clinic, where the electricity has been turned off and Adam's Oldbody has disappeared.

"The Body" has the terse speed and casual logic of a screenplay and might make a good movie. Identity switch is easier to film than age regression; for example, "All of Me," with Steve Martin and Lily Tomlin (1984), and "Freaky Friday," with Jamie Lee Curtis and Lindsey Lohan, still playing at your neighborhood second-run cineplex. Intuitively, being in your own body seems easier to correct than suffering the aging process. The hero of Hanif Kureishi's first novel says of his mother, "I imagined that she considered her body to be an inconvenient object surrounding her, as if she were stranded on an unexplored desert island." In fiction, we readily accept Gregor Samsa's awaking within the body of a gigantic insect and Dorian Gray's transfer of his body's ravages to a portrait. Yet human consciousness is part and parcel of the body that holds it, and one regrets that Kureishi, in conducting his thought-experiment, didn't pursue some of his own hints. While Leo's body is still new to him, he tells Ralph:

> "I can feel things, perhaps memories, of the man who was here first. Perhaps the physical body has a soul. There's a phrase of Freud's that might apply here: the bodily ego, he calls it, I think."

Leo's body belonged, Ralph tells him, to a Los Angeles homosexual who suffered from clinical depression and killed himself with carbon monoxide; but the fascinating idea of a haunted body, whose previous tenant makes himself felt throughout its nervous system and utmost cells, fades away as *la dolce vita*, still a heady topic for Kureishi, takes over the narrative. Leo's borrowed body becomes a mere commodity, for which there exists a competing bidder.

Perhaps no novel can do justice to the ancient and still popular concept of leaving our bodies, which are both our enablers and our prisons. Our relation to our bodies lies deeper than circumstance, undemonstrable and irrefutable, along with the sensation that there *is* a relation, of one thing to something else, though materialist science tells us that out of our bodies we are nothing. Kureishi, who studied philosophy at the University of London, glances at the ontology shivering in his ectoplasmic subject matter, but then turns away. When the playful, murderous Matte, who has been reading Nietzsche and Goethe, attempts to engage Leo in discussion, Leo retreats: "I didn't want to listen to him, or argue anymore. . . . I found the encounter disturbing. Matte and I were both mutants, freaks, human unhumans—a fact I could at least forget when I was with real people, those with death in them." Death equals real: that consoling notion lies near the heart of the confessions of both Leo and Max Tivoli. When Matte, an enthusiast for the new brain-transplant technology, announces, "Death is dead," Leo responds, "Oh, no, everyone'll miss it so!" (Exclamation point mine.) He ends in sorry contemplation of his existence as a "stranger on the earth, a nobody with nothing," stuck in "the nightmare of eternal life." He seems to have forgotten that by trading his body in for a newer model he has postponed but not forever avoided the final breakdown. ♦

THE NEW YORKER IS A REGISTERED TRADEMARK OF ADVANCE MAGAZINE PUBLISHERS INC., PUBLISHED THROUGH ITS DIVISION THE CONDÉ NAST PUBLICATIONS. COPYRIGHT ©2004 THE CONDÉ NAST PUBLICATIONS. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.

Volume LXXIX, No. 44, January 26, 2004. The New Yorker (ISSN 0028-792X) is published weekly (except for six combined issues: February 16 & 23, April 19 & 26, June 14 & 21, July 12 & 19, August 9 & 16, and December 20 & 27) by The Condé Nast Publications, which is a division of Advance Magazine Publishers Inc. PRINCIPAL OFFICE: The Condé Nast Building, 4 Times Square, New York, NY 10036. David Carey, vice-president and publisher; Chris Mitchell, associate publisher; Peter W. Jurew, associate publisher, marketing; Ronda Carnegie, advertising director; William Li, advertising director; Marie Wolpert, advertising director; Susan Harrington, director of creative services; Bob Gruters, director of marketing and strategic planning; Theresa Gaffney, creative development director; Rosemary Stanton, advertising business director. Advance Magazine Publishers Inc.: S. I. Newhouse, Jr., chairman; Charles H. Townsend, C.O.O.; John W. Bellando, executive vice-president and C.F.O.; Jill Bright, executive vice-president–human resources; John Buese, executive vice-president–chief information officer; David Orlin, senior vice-president–strategic sourcing; Robert Bennis, senior vice-president–real estate. Shared services provided by Advance Magazine Group: David B. Chemidlin, senior vice-president–general manager, shared services center. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and at additional mailing offices. Canada Post Publications Mail Agreement No. 40644503. Canadian Goods and Services Tax Registration No. R123242885. Canada Post return undeliverable Canadian addresses to: P.O. Box 1632, Station A, Windsor, ON N9A7C9.

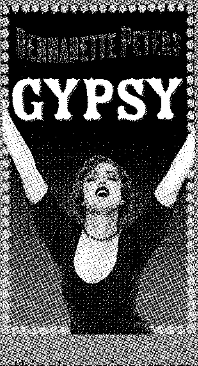
POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO THE NEW YORKER, P.O. Box 37684, Boone, IA 50037-0684. FOR SUBSCRIPTIONS, ADDRESS CHANGES, ADJUSTMENTS, OR BACK ISSUE INQUIRIES: Please write to The New Yorker, P.O. Box 37684, Boone, IA 50037-0684; call (800) 825-2510; or e-mail subscriptions@newyorker.com. Four weeks are required for change of address. Please give both new and old address as printed on most recent label. First copy of new subscription will be mailed within four weeks of receipt of order. For advertising inquiries, please call William Li at (212) 286-5611. For submission guidelines, please refer to our Web site, www.newyorker.com. Address all editorial, business, and production correspondence to The New Yorker, 4 Times Square, New York, NY 10036. For cover reprints, please call (800) 897-8666, or e-mail covers@cartoonbank.com. For Permissions and Reprint requests, please call (212) 286-8349 or fax requests to (212) 286-8628. No part of this periodical may be reproduced without the consent of The New Yorker. The New Yorker's name and logo, and the various titles and headings herein, are trademarks of Advance Magazine Publishers Inc. Visit us online: www.newyorker.com. To subscribe to other Condé Nast magazines on the World Wide Web, visit www.condenet.com. Occasionally, we make our subscriber list available to carefully screened companies that offer products and services that we believe would interest our readers. If you do not want to receive these offers and/or information, please advise us at P.O. Box 37684, Boone, IA 50037-0684 or call (800) 825-2510.

THE NEW YORKER IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE RETURN OR LOSS OF, OR FOR DAMAGE OR ANY OTHER INJURY TO, UNSOLICITED MANUSCRIPTS, UNSOLICITED ART WORK (INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, DRAWINGS, PHOTOGRAPHS, AND TRANSPARENCIES), OR ANY OTHER UNSOLICITED MATERIALS. THOSE SUBMITTING MANUSCRIPTS, ART WORK, OR OTHER MATERIALS FOR CONSIDERATION SHOULD NOT SEND ORIGINALS, UNLESS SPECIFICALLY REQUESTED TO DO SO BY THE NEW YORKER IN WRITING. MANUSCRIPTS, ART WORK, AND OTHER MATERIALS SUBMITTED MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY A SELF-ADDRESSED STAMPED ENVELOPE.

advertisement

ON THE TOWN

Be the first to hear about events, promotions, and special offers from New Yorker advertisers.



Everything's coming up raves!
The sensational new Broadway production of GYPSY, starring Bernadette Peters, has taken Broadway by storm, leaving audiences and critics alike dazzled by its glories.
Ben Brantley, of the New York *Times*, cheers, "This may be the greatest of all American musicals." You've gotta get a ticket!
Shubert Theatre, 225 W. 44th Street.

Call 212-239-6200 or 800-432-7250, or visit www.gypsythemusical.com.

Enter the "Fifty Words for a Better Future" Essay Contest

In fifty words or less, share your vision of how the U.S. Military* can create a better world for Americans and all the world's citizens.

Entries from individuals and families welcome (entrants must be eighteen years or older). Make this a family activity and discuss the ways that the armed services may be relevant to all your lives today and tomorrow. In fifty words, the future is yours to discover.

To enter—and for information about the prize and complete rules—visit "Sweepstakes and Contests" on www.newyorkerreaderlink.com/betterfuture.

Entries must be received no earlier than January 26, 2004 and must be received no later than April 23, 2004.

Contest sponsored by
Today's Military

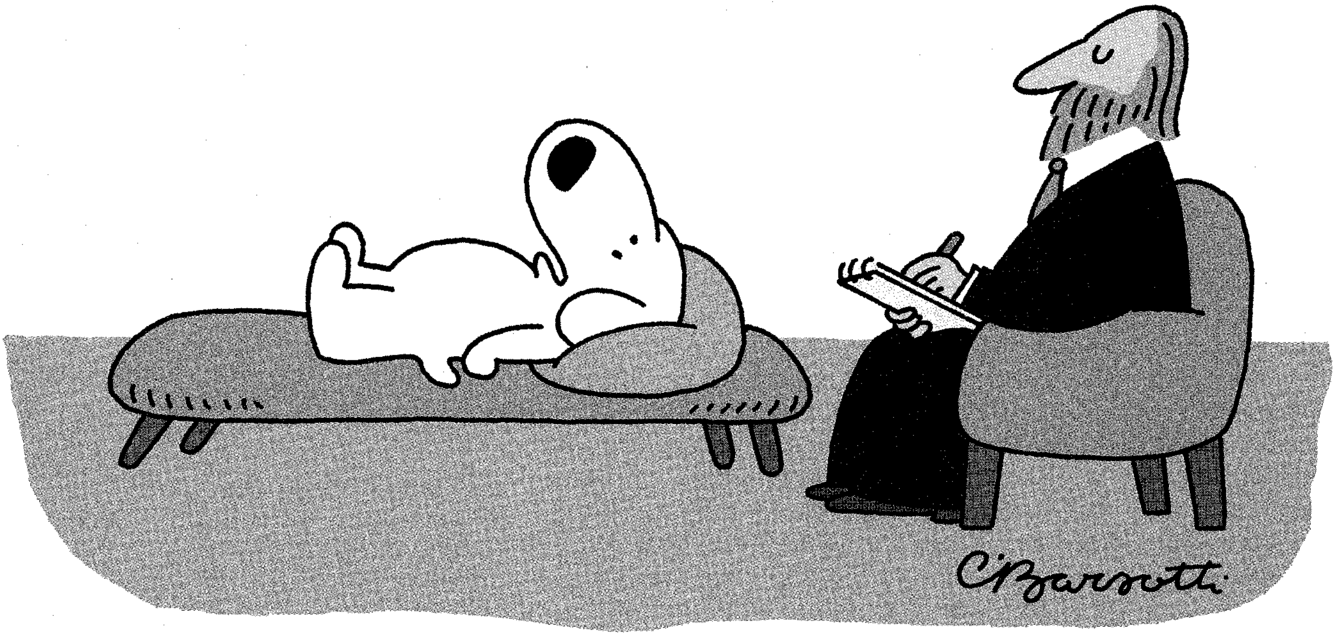
TODAY'S MILITARY
www.todaysmilitary.com

See it for what it really is.℠
*Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, Army Reserve, Marines Corps Reserve, Naval Reserve, Air Force Reserve, Coast Guard Reserve, Army National Guard, Air National Guard

For more information, log on to www.newyorker.com and click on The New Yorker ReaderLink.

THE BACK PAGE

# AND THE WINNER IS . . .



*"I can smell my own fear."*

For this year's cartoon-caption contest, we challenged our readers to make their own cartoon. More specifically, we challenged them to make their own Charles Barsotti cartoon. Barsotti drew the basic setup—a therapist taking notes next to an empty couch—and then supplied characters who ranged from the conventional (man, woman) to the unconventional (squirrel, superhero), from the surreal (dragon, screwdriver) to favorites from the Barsotti œuvre (king, dog). The task for readers was more difficult than in past years, but they responded with the same enthusiasm. In fact, something about the process of cutting, pasting, and designing an original piece of humorous artwork inspired the amateur cartoonists to new heights. Call it group therapy.

According to the contest's rules, the characters could be cut out and placed on the couch. Most readers went for a single-character setup, proposing self-hating dragons, sexually confused kings, and Oedipally conflicted dogs. Other readers left the couch blank, stacked all eight characters on top of one another, or performed cosmetic surgery (the squirrel, wearing the superhero's cape, became a flying squirrel; the woman, her hair painted with Wite-Out, became Barbara Bush). The squirrel was the least popular character; the most popular was the screwdriver, who was the source of numerous jokes about sex (captions too obvious to print), alcohol ("I don't even like vodka"), and general malaise ("I just don't know which way to turn"). More than a few readers mistook the screwdriver for a parking meter, and a couple even thought it was a guitar.

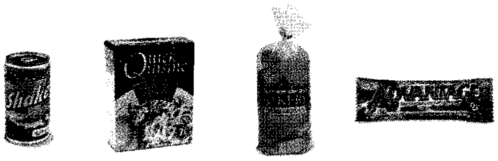
In the end, though, the best cartoons were those which combined this spirit of experimentation with the original mission of the contest: to create a genuine ersatz Barsotti cartoon, complete with psychological depth and poignant wit. In one of the entries that we selected as finalists, the superhero muses about his place in the world: "Sometimes I think everybody'd be better off if I *was* a bird or a plane" (Kip Conlon, of Brooklyn). In another, the king complains to the therapist, "Mom always liked you best" (June Anderson and Dr. Alice McKay, of Henderson, Nevada). And in yet another the therapist imagines the dragon mounted like a hunting trophy on the wall (Dorothy Peca, of El Paso, Texas). The winning entry (above) was created by Danial Adkison, of Brooklyn, and he will receive a version of his cartoon drawn by Charles Barsotti.

WAKE UP
TO ATKINS™

THE ORIGINAL LOW CARB LIFESTYLE™
ATKINS
Morning Start
BREAKFAST CEREAL
Crunchy Almond Crisp
Rich In Fiber • No Trans Fats
Apple Crisp
BREAKFAST BARS
2g NET CARBS
NET WT 1.3 OZ (37g)

Fourteen studies in the last two years have shown that the Atkins lifestyle may be a better way for Americans to achieve a healthy weight. Now there are more than 100 products available to help make it easy and enjoyable, such as Atkins new *Morning Start* cereals and breakfast bars, each with no more than 5 grams of Net Carbs per serving.

***JOIN THE LOW-CARB REVOLUTION***


Shake
Quick Quisine
ADVANTAGE

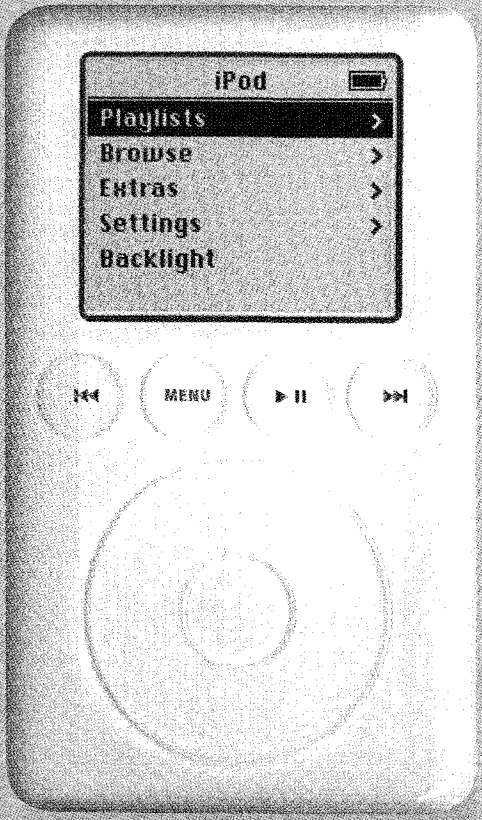
BAKERY
Quick Quisine
CRUNCHERS

ATKINS®

LOOK FOR THE RED "A"

ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

iPod mini


iPod
Playlists
Browse
Extras
Settings
Backlight
MENU

**Small.**
(10,000 songs[*])

iPod
Playlists
Browse
Extras
Settings
Backlight
MENU

**Mini.**
(1,000 songs)

Meet iPod mini. It's the world's smallest 1,000-song[‡] player, comes in 5 colors and, like its big brother, works with Mac or Windows. Just $249[†]

TM & ©2004 Apple Computer, Inc. All rights reserved. *40GB model. ‡4 min./song 128Kbps AAC or MP3 encoding. †SRP. Call 1-800-MY-APPLE or visit www.apple.com/ipod.

ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED